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CASSELL'S
HISTORY OF ENGLAND

FROM THE ROMAN INVASION
TO THE WARS OF THE ROSES

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS, INCLUDING COLOURED
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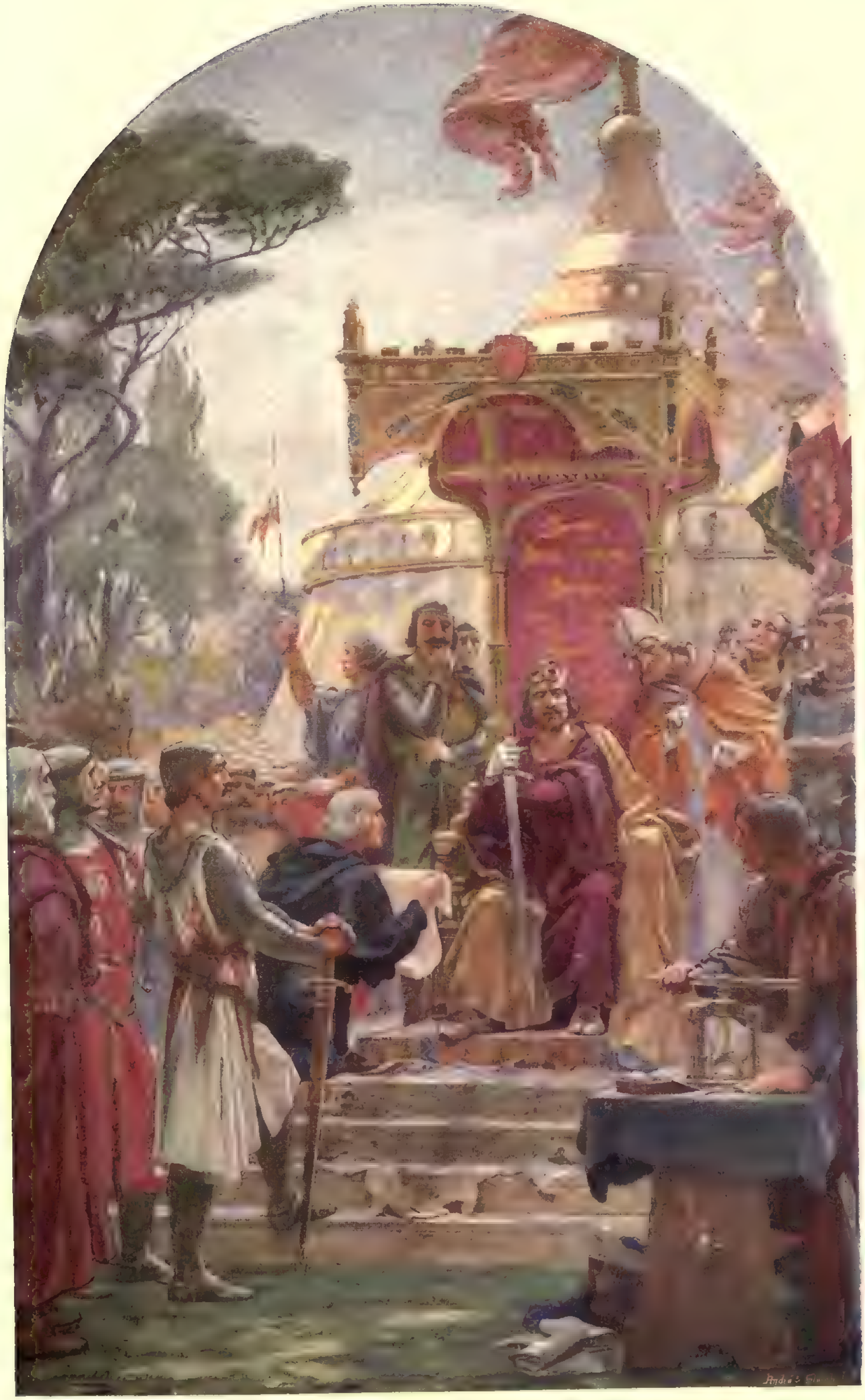


From the Design for the Cartoon in the Royal Exchange.

KING JOHN GRANTING MAGNA CHARTA.

BY ERNEST NORMAND.

CASSELL'S ILLUSTRATED

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

LANDING OF THE ROMANS ON THE COAST OF KENT. (*See p.* 6.)

CHAPTER I.

THE ROMAN RULE IN BRITAIN.

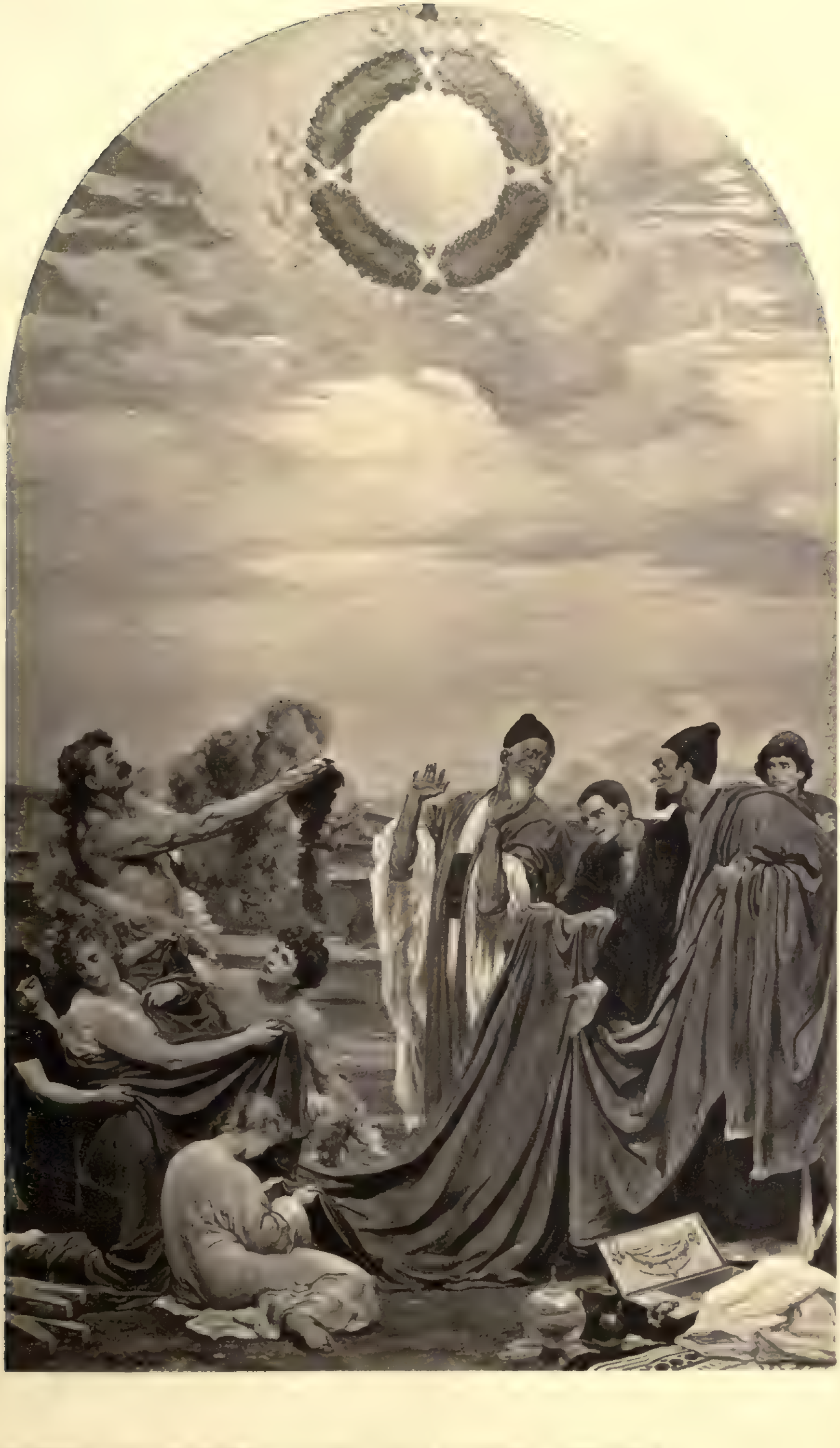
Earliest Notices of the British Isles—The Celts—Their Settlement in Britain—Their Character and Customs—Druidism—Its Organisation and Authority—Its Tenets—Stonehenge and other Remains—Cæsar's Preparations—The First Invasion—Peril of the Romans and their Retirement—The Second Invasion—Cæsar's Battles with Cassivelaunus—Claudius in Britain—The Resistance of Caractacus—His Defeat and Capture—His Speech before Claudius—The Conquest of Anglesea—Boadicea's Rebellion—The Capture of Camulodunum and London—Her Defeat and Death—Agricola in Britain—His Campaigns and Administration—His Campaign against the Caledonians—His Recall—The Walls of Hadrian and Severus—Rivals to the Emperor—Constantine's Accession—Christianity in Britain—Invasions of the Picts and Scots—Dismemberment of the Roman Empire and Departure of the Romans—Divisions and Administration of Britain under the Romans.

SEPARATED from the continent of Europe by the sea, the British isles were not known to the nations of antiquity until a somewhat late date. Herodotus was ignorant of their existence; but Strabo, a contemporary of Cæsar, tells us that the Carthaginians had for a long period carried on a considerable commerce with the Cassiterides, or tin-islands, which are usually identified with the Scilly islands, and doubtless included also part of the Cornish coast. Again, Pytheas, a merchant of Marseilles, who lived about 332 B.C., visited this country in the course of his life, and fragments of his diary are still extant. He seems to have coasted round a considerable portion of what is now England, and his observations on the inhabitants are singularly acute. About two centuries later, Posidonius, another Greek traveller, visited Belerion, as he called it—that is, Cornwall; but, until the invasion of Cæsar, the extent of these islands, their main geographical features, and the tribes that inhabited them, were practically a matter of more or less complete ignorance to the civilised world that dwelt round the shores of the Mediterranean.

From the narrative of Cæsar, we gather that the bulk of the population of England, Scotland, and Wales at the time of his invasion was of Celtic origin; that is, it belonged to one of the branches of the great family of nations which is commonly known as the Indo-European, or Aryan, and which includes the Celts, the Greeks and Italians, the Germans, the Lithuanians and Slavs in Europe; and in Asia the Armenians, Persians, and the chief peoples of Hindustan. Of the Aryan nations, the Celts were probably the first to arrive in Europe from the East, though the date of their migration is purely conjectural. They pushed across the great central plateau, until the vanguard reached the ocean; and at first probably occupied a very large portion of Europe, but, being driven out by the stronger Germans, were gradually confined to the Iberian peninsula, France, Switzerland, and the British isles.

As it is impossible to fix the date of the Celtic migration into Europe, so it is equally impossible to conjecture the when and why of the Celtic invasion of Britain. It is pretty certain that they found other races here on their arrival; and that they did not succeed by any means in thoroughly exterminating them. It has been surmised, indeed, that the Silures, who played a prominent part in the resistance to the Romans, and who inhabited the south of Wales and Monmouthshire, belonged to some more primitive race than the Celts. After the Celts, in the same way came the Belgæ, who were of German origin, and who settled on the southern coast. But the mass of the population was, as we have said, purely Celtic, and was composed of two large divisions—the Gaels, who dwelt on the northern and western coasts of what are now called England and Scotland, and over the great part of Ireland; and the Britons, who occupied the country south of the Friths of Forth and Clyde, with the exception of what is now Hampshire and Sussex, where dwelt the Belgæ.

It was with the Britons, therefore, that the Romans were chiefly concerned, and we would fain have some information of their manners and customs other than that derived from the enemy, impartial though Cæsar and Tacitus were. But there was no British historian to chronicle the mighty deeds of the Celtic warriors, or to describe the home-life of the people. The picture we are able to construct, therefore, is derived almost entirely from the Romans; nevertheless, it is a fairly complete one. They describe a tall and finely built race, recklessly brave, strikingly patriotic, and faithful to the family tie; courteous also in manner, and eloquent of speech, and very



PHŒNICIANS BARTERING WITH THE ANCIENT BRITONS.

From the Wall Painting by Lord Leighton, in the Royal Exchange.

1.

fond of novelty, especially when it took the form of the arrival of a stranger in the village. At the same time the Britons were an unpractical race, never constant to any one object, quarrelsome amongst themselves, and utterly unable to combine against a common enemy.

Such was the moral character of the Britons. They dwelt in villages, in which the cottages were wattled and thatched with straw, and in time of danger repaired to a fortified and entrenched stronghold, or *dun*. The name of London records the site of one of these ancient places of refuge. They had large quantities of cattle, and grew corn, which they stored, in some districts at any rate, underground. Their breed of hunting dogs was also celebrated. Pytheas informs us that they made a drink of mixed wheat and honey, which is still drunk in part of Wales under the name of mead; while other writers, probably deriving their information from him, tell us that they drank another liquor made of barley, which is also not unknown in these days. They fought under their kings and chiefs, and were well armed with sword, spear, axe, and shield. The chiefs also fought from chariots, which they managed with great skill, and the onslaught of the British host was accompanied by loud cries and the blowing of horns, with which each man was provided.

Religion was in the hands of the Druids, who combined the character of prophet and priest. It was dark and mysterious as the gloomy forests in which it first drew birth, and in whose deepest recesses they celebrated their cruel rites. Its ministers built no covered temples, deeming it an insult to their gods to attempt to enclose their emblems in an edifice surrounded by walls, and erected by mortal hands; the forest was their temple, and a rough unhewn stone their altar. They worshipped a god of the sky and thunder, whom they identified with Jupiter; a sun-god, whom, when they were Romanised, they called Apollo; a god of war, afterwards called Mars; and a goddess who presided over births, like the Latin Lucina; and Andate, the goddess of victory. Besides these, who may be regarded as their superior deities, they had a great number of inferior ones. Each wood, fountain, lake, and mountain had its tutelary genius, whom they were accustomed to invoke with sacrifice and prayer.

The Druids were ruled by a chief whom they elected; they were the interpreters of the laws, which they never permitted to be committed to writing, the instructors of youth, and the judges of the people—a tremendous power to be lodged in the hands of any peculiar class. There were also Bards, whose duty it was to preserve in verse the memory of any remarkable event; to celebrate the triumph of their heroes; and, by their exhortation and songs, excite the chiefs and people to deeds of courage and daring on the day of battle.

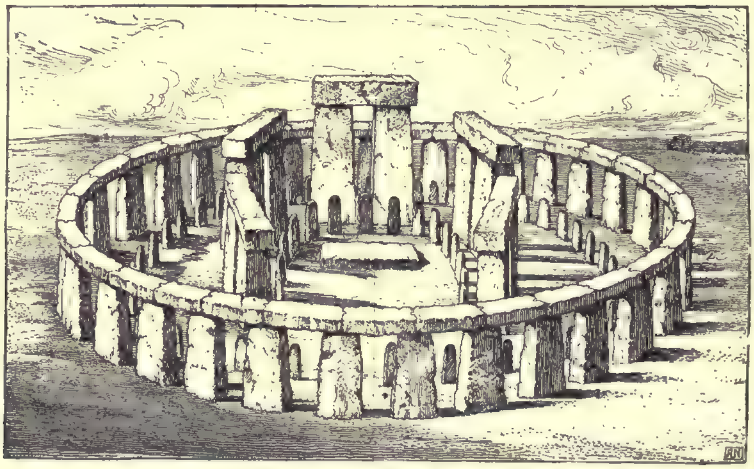
It is impossible not to be struck by the profound cunning which presided over the organisation of this terrible priesthood, and concentrated all authority in its hands. Its ministers placed themselves between man and the altar, permitting his approach only in mystery and gloom. They wrought upon his imagination by the sacrifice of human life, and the most terrible denunciations of the anger of their gods on all who opposed them. As the instructors of youth, they moulded the pliant mind, and fashioned it to their purpose; as the judges of the people, there was no appeal against their decisions, for none but the Druids could pronounce authoritatively what was the law, there being no written code to refer to; they alone possessed the right to recompense or punish: thus the present and future welfare of their followers alike depended upon them.

The severest penalty inflicted by the Druids was the interdiction of the sacrifice to those who had offended them. Woe to the unhappy wretch on whom the awful sentence fell! He ceased to be considered a human being. Like the beast of the forest, his life was at the mercy of any one who chose to take it. He lost all civil rights, and could neither inherit land nor sue for the recovery of debts; every one was at liberty to spoil his property; even his nearest kindred fled from him in horror. They were also accustomed to sacrifice human victims on their altars, or burnt them as offerings to the gods, in wicker baskets.

It is now time to give some account of the dogmas of this extinct religion, once the general faith of Britain. Like the monks of the Middle Ages, the Druids of the higher orders lived in community in the remote depths of the vast gloomy forests, where they celebrated their rites. In these retreats they initiated the youthful aspirants for the priesthood, who frequently passed a novitiate of twenty years before being admitted. Disciples of all ranks flocked to them, despite the severity of the probation, tempted, no doubt, by the honours and great privileges attached to the order, amongst which exemption from taxation and servitude was not the least. The mistletoe is said by Pliny to have been a peculiarly sacred plant in their rites.

The Druids taught the immortality of the soul, and its transmigration from one body to another, till, by some extraordinary act of virtue or courage, it merited to be received into the assembly of the gods. Cæsar, in his "Commentaries," also informs us that they instructed their pupils in the movements of the heavenly bodies, and the grandeur of the universe. Their knowledge of mathematics must have been considerable, since we find it applied to the measurement of the earth and stars. In mechanics they were equally advanced, judging from the monuments which remain to us. Of these, the most remarkable in England are Stonehenge, consisting of 139 enormous stones, ranged in a circle; and that of Avebury, in Wiltshire, which covers a space of twenty-eight acres of land. But the largest of all the Druid temples is situated at Carnac, in the department of Morbihan, in France. It is formed of 400 stones, varying from five to twenty-seven feet in height, and ranged in eleven concentric lines. It should be mentioned, however, that some authorities consider these erections to belong to a period anterior to the arrival of the Celts in Europe, though they were probably utilised by them.

STONEHENGE FROM THE NORTH-WEST. *(From a Photograph by Frith & Co, Reigate.)*



STONEHENGE (RESTORED).
(From the Model in the Blackmore Museum, Salisbury, after the Restoration by Dr. Stukeley.)

Such was the country and such the condition of its inhabitants when in 55 B.C. Cæsar undertook its invasion, to which he was led not so much by the thirst of dominion as by the necessity he found himself under of doing something to acquire a great name at Rome. He had already partially subdued the Gauls, and determined on striking a blow at Britain. Having decided on the expedition,

DRUIDS INCITING THE BRITONS TO OPPOSE THE LANDING OF THE ROMANS. *(See p. 6.)*

the victorious general commenced his preparations with his accustomed energy. His first care was to obtain hostages from the Gauls: he questioned the merchants and others who had visited Britain as to its resources and extent, the natives which inhabited it, their manners, customs, and religion, and sent Commius, whom he had created King of the Atrabates in Gaul, to demand the submission of the islanders.

On the first news of the intended descent, the

Britons, excited by the Druids and Bards, assembled in arms, in order to defend their coasts, but at the same time did not neglect other means of warding off the danger which threatened their independence, and despatched ambassadors to Cæsar with offers of alliance. They were received courteously, although the wily Roman knew that, incited by their priests, they had arrested his messenger, and kept him in chains. Meanwhile Cæsar prepared his fleet, and assembled his soldiers for the expedition. He embarked the infantry of two of his legions in eighty vessels, which he assembled at Itius Portus, supposed by some writers to be Calais, by others the village of Wissant, between that place and Boulogne. He divided the vessels amongst his principal officers, and set sail with a favourable wind during the night. Eighteen galleys at a distant part of the coast had received his cavalry, and sailed about the same time. At ten the following morning the expedition appeared off the coast, where the inhabitants were seen in arms, ready to receive it. The spot, it would seem, was unfavourable for landing, and Cæsar hesitated, and dropped anchor till three in the afternoon, hoping for the arrival of his other galleys. Disappointed in this expectation, he sailed along the coast, and finally decided on disembarking at Deal, where the shore was comparatively level, and presented less difficulty for such an enterprise. But here, too, the Britons were prepared, a considerable force being collected to oppose him. The galleys drew too much water to permit the invaders to land at once upon the beach, and the soldiers hesitated. There was a momentary confusion amongst them. "Follow me, comrades!" exclaimed the standard-bearer, "if you would not see the eagle in the hands of the enemy. For myself, if I perish, I shall have done my duty to Rome and to my general." At these words he plunged into the waves, and was followed by the men, who leaped tumultuously after him, ashamed, most likely, of their previous cowardice and hesitation. On reaching the shore, they fell with the utmost fury on the enemy, whose undisciplined ranks could ill sustain the shock of the Roman legion; still, they fought desperately, incited by their bards and priests, who sang the songs of victory, and exhorted them to renew the combat each time they seemed to waver. At last they were compelled to give way, and retreat to the shelter of the woods, with their chariots and broken ranks. Cæsar himself informs us that he was prevented from pursuing the victory by the absence of his cavalry, a circumstance which he bitterly laments, since its presence alone was wanting to crown his fortune.

Although he did not venture to follow the fugitives, they sent ambassadors, accompanied by Commius, whom the Britons released from prison and chains, to sue for peace. The victor complained, and with some show of justice, of the reception he had met with, after they had sent envoys to him in Gaul with offers of submission, and also of the arrest of his ambassador; and lamented the blood that had been shed. To this harangue the Britons artfully replied that they had imprisoned Commius in order to preserve him from the fury of the people, and with this excuse Cæsar either was, or affected to be, content. He granted the peace they came to solicit, and demanded hostages, which were promised, for the future.

A storm dispersed the eighteen galleys which were to transport the cavalry of Cæsar, and drove them back upon the coast of Gaul. This was not the only misfortune the Romans endured. That same night the moon was at its full; it was the season of the equinox, and the tide rose to an unusual height, filling the vessels which Cæsar had drawn out of the reach of danger, as he imagined, on the sands. The larger ships, which had served him as a means of transport, were driven from their anchors, and many of them wrecked.

Although perfectly aware of the perils which menaced their invaders, the Britons appear to have proceeded with the utmost caution. Whilst a league was secretly being formed to crush the Romans, their chiefs appeared daily in their camp, professing unbroken friendship. Suddenly they fell upon the seventh legion, which had been sent to a distance to forage. The plan was well contrived to defeat the enemy in detail. Many of their leaders remained in camp, in order to lull suspicion, whilst their confederates surprised the Romans, who, having laid aside their arms, were soon surrounded, and must have been cut off but for the timely arrival of Cæsar, who, warned by his outposts that a cloud of dust thicker than usual had been seen at a distance, guessed immediately what had occurred. With a portion of his army he fell upon the assailants, and, after a desperate struggle, disengaged the threatened legion, and returned with it to the camp in safety. The lesson was a sharp one, and the rains soon afterwards setting in, the invader did not attempt to renew the battle.

The islanders, meanwhile, had not been idle: messengers had been despatched in every direction, calling on the various nations to take arms; the Druids preached war to the death; and a sufficient force was soon assembled to attack the Romans in their camp. Discipline, however, again prevailed against the courage of the barbarians, as Tacitus contemptuously calls them; although he admits at the same time their bravery, and adds that it was a fortunate thing for Cæsar that the country was so divided into petty states that the jealousies of their respective rulers prevented the unity of action which alone could ensure success. Had the Britons been united, they might have bid defiance to the legions of Rome. Once more the islanders demanded peace, which Cæsar granted them; in fact, he was scarcely in a position to do otherwise, for he already meditated a retreat. He embarked the army suddenly in the night, and retired to Gaul, taking the hostages he had received with him. Although the senate of Rome ordered a thanksgiving of twenty days for the triumph of the Roman arms, the first expedition against the island cannot be regarded as other than a failure.

For the second invasion, which took place in the following year, preparations were made commensurate with the importance of the task proposed. Cæsar having assembled 800 vessels, on board of which were five legions, and 2,000 horsemen of the noblest families in Gaul, set sail, and landed without opposition at Ryde. This time there was no enemy to oppose him; for the Britons, terrified at the appearance of this immense armament, had retreated to their natural fastnesses, the forests, Leaving ten cohorts and 300 horsemen to guard the camp and fleet, under the orders of Quintus Atrius, Cæsar set forward in search of the enemy, whom he discovered, after a march of twelve miles, on the banks of a river, where they had drawn up their chariots and horsemen. Profiting by their elevated position, they accepted, or rather engaged, the combat, and when repulsed withdrew into an admirably fortified camp, which was not taken without much difficulty. The Britons, as usual after a defeat, retreated once more to their woods, where it was impossible for the legions of Rome to follow, or the cavalry to act against them.

On the following morning, just as the victorious leader was about to re-commence his march, news arrived from the camp that a violent tempest had seriously damaged the fleet. Many of his vessels were wrecked, and others rendered unfit for service. Like a prudent general, Cæsar at once returned to the camp, to assure himself of the extent of the injury done to his fleet, and found it more considerable than he imagined. Forty vessels were lost; the rest could be repaired, though not without great labour and time. Every artificer in his army was set to work; others were sent for from the continent; and instructions written to Labienus in Gaul to construct new galleys to replace those which were lost. The next step was worthy the genius and reputation of Cæsar. After having repaired his ships, he caused his legions to draw them out of reach of the tide, high up on the shore, and enclosed the whole of them in a fortified camp—an immense work, when we consider that it was executed in an enemy's country, and the scanty means at his command for such an undertaking.

Meanwhile the Britons had united under Cassivelaunus, head-king of the tribes north of the Thames, and Cæsar advanced to meet him. The king proved a doughty opponent, seldom venturing upon a pitched battle, but harassing the Romans by sudden attacks, in which the chariots proved particularly formidable. At length Cæsar managed, with difficulty, to cross the Thames somewhere above London, and ravaged the king's territory. Fortunately the powerful tribe of the Trinobantes, who inhabited part of Middlesex and Essex, came over to him at this juncture, having old scores to pay off against Cassivelaunus, and they were followed by other tribes. Cæsar was therefore able to storm Verulam, the stronghold of the British king, and then, finding that his camp on the coast was being besieged by the four kings of Kent, that his troops were being wearied out by the constant alarms, and having, in addition, received unpleasant news from Gaul, he accepted the offers of peace made by Cassivelaunus, and departed. So ended Cæsar's invasions of Britain.

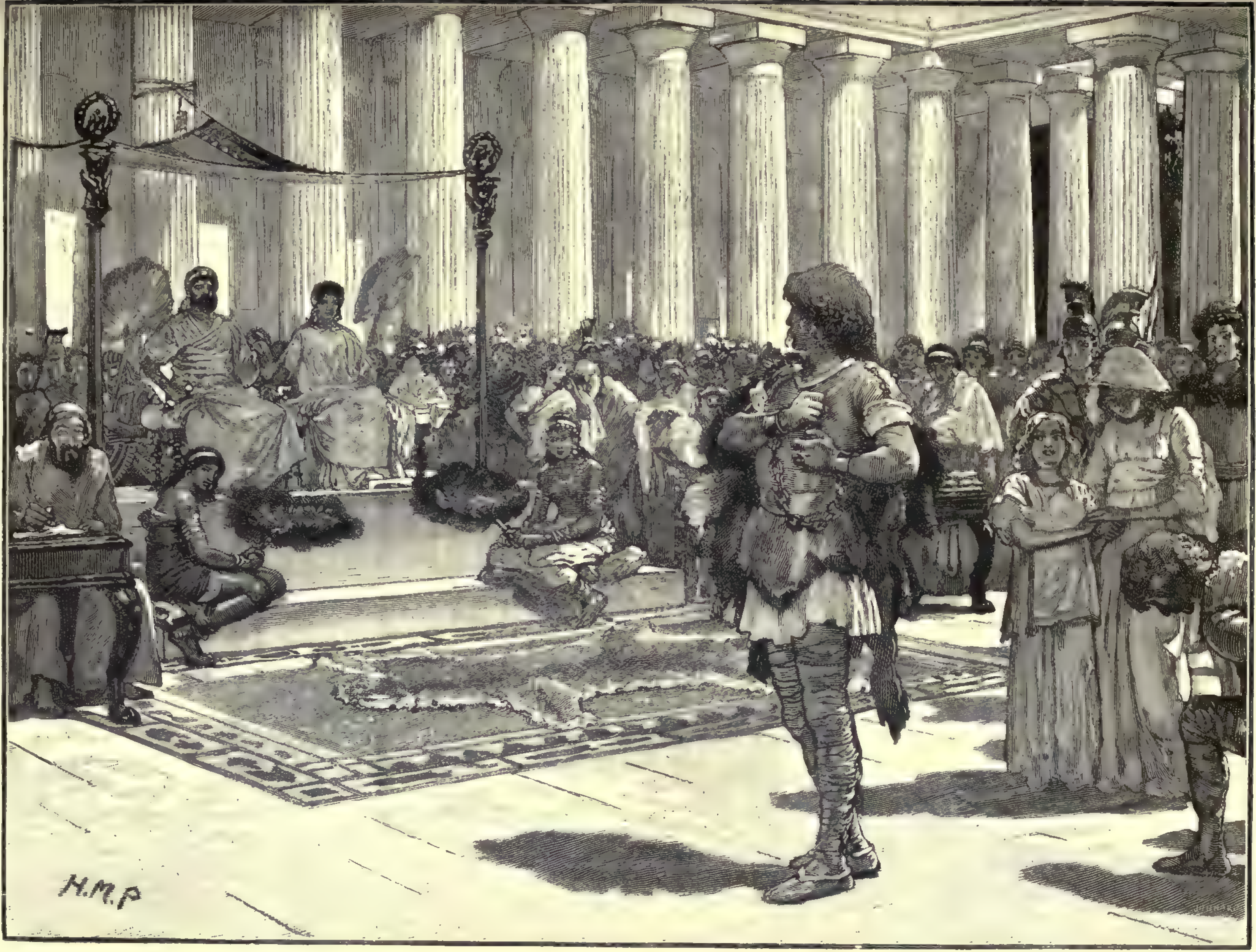
For nearly a century, that is, until A.D. 43, Britain remained undisturbed by the Romans; but at length the Emperor Claudius determined that the island should be thoroughly conquered. Accordingly his general, Aulus Plautius, landed with an army, and, after gaining considerable successes, wrote to Claudius inviting him to pass over to the island and conclude the war himself. The emperor accepted the invitation, and took the command of his legions in Britain. He crossed the Thames, and seized upon the fortress of Camulodunum (Colchester or Malden, authorities are divided as to which), receiving in his progress the submission of a number of petty kings and chiefs This had been the stronghold of Cunobelinus, the Cymbeline of Shakespeare. Having reduced a part of the country to the condition of a Roman province, Claudius returned to enjoy the honours of a triumph in Rome. It was celebrated with a degree of unusual magnificence, splendid games, and rejoicings.

After passing four years on the island, Plautius was recalled to Rome, where the jealousy of the emperor limited the honours decreed to the victorious general to a simple ovation. He was succeeded by Ostorius Scapula, who found, on his arrival, the affairs of his countrymen in the greatest disorder. The Britons, trusting that a general newly arrived in the island would not enter on a campaign in the beginning of winter, had divided their forces, to plunder and lay waste the territories of such persons as were in alliance with Rome. Ostorius, however, contrary to their expectations, pursued the war with vigour, gave the dispersed bands no time to unite or rally, and commanded the people whom he suspected of disaffection to give up their arms. As a further precaution, he erected forts on the banks of the Avon and the Severn.

The moment appeared favourable to the victorious general to subdue the Silures, a fierce and warlike nation, who, under their king, Caractacus, still held out against the Roman arms (A.D. 50). Hitherto clemency and force had alike proved unavailing to reduce them to submission, and Ostorius prepared his expedition with a prudence and foresight worthy of the struggle on which the establishment of the supremacy of Rome in the island, in a great measure, depended. He first settled a strong colony of his veteran soldiers at Camulodunum, on the conquered lands, to keep in check the neighbouring tribes, and spread by their example a knowledge of the useful arts. He then set forth at the head of his bravest legions in search of Caractacus, who had retreated from his own states, and transported the war into the

JULIUS CÆSAR.

(From the Bust in the British Museum.)



CARACTACUS BEFORE CLAUDIUS. (*See p.* 10.)

country of the Ordovices, in the middle of Wales. The warlike Briton had assembled under his command all who had vowed an eternal resistance to the invaders, and fortified his position by entrenchments of earth, in imitation of the Roman military works. In Shropshire, where the great struggle is supposed to have taken place, there is a hill which the inhabitants still call Caer Caradoc. It corresponds exactly with the description which Tacitus has given of the fortifications erected by Caractacus, and answers to the Latin words *Castra Caractaci.* This warrior, whose devotion to the liberties of his country merited a better fate, did all that a patriot and a soldier could do to excite the spirit of his countrymen. He reminded the chiefs under his command that the day of battle would be the day of deliverance from a degrading bondage, and at the same time appealed to their patriotism, by reminding them that their ancestors had defeated the attempts of Cæsar. The address was received with acclamation, and the excited Britons bound themselves by oaths not to shrink from the darts of their enemies.

The cries of rage with which the invaders were received, the resolute bearing of the Silures, astonished the Roman general, who examined with disquietude the river which defended the rude entrenchment on one side, the ramparts of earth and stone, not unskilfully thrown up, and the rugged rock, which towered above them, crowned with numberless defenders. His soldiers demanded to be led on, urging that nothing was impossible to true courage; the tribunes held the same language, and Ostorius led on his army to the attack. Under a shower of arrows it crossed the river, and arrived at the foot of the rude entrenchment, but not without suffering severely. Then was seen the advantage of discipline over untrained courage. The Roman soldiers serried their ranks, and raising their bucklers over their heads, formed with them an impenetrable roof, which securely sheltered them whilst they demolished the earthworks. That once accomplished, the victory was assured. The half-naked Britons, with their clubs and arrows, were no match against the well-armed legions of Rome; but from the summit of the rocks still poured death upon their enemies, till the light troops succeeded in slaying or dispersing them. The victory of the Romans was complete. The wife and daughter of Caractacus were taken prisoners, and the illustrious chief of the Silures soon afterwards shared a similar destiny. His mother-in-law, Cartismandua, Queen of the Brigantes, to whom he had fled for shelter, delivered him in chains to his enemies. Ostorius sent him and his family to Rome, as the noblest trophies of his conquest.

The fame of Caractacus had penetrated even to Italy. The Roman citizens were anxious to behold the barbarian who had so long braved their power. Although defeated and a captive, the natural greatness of his soul did not abandon him. Tacitus relates that his first remark on beholding the imperial city was surprise that those who possessed such magnificent palaces at home should envy him a poor hovel in Britain. He was conducted before the Emperor Claudius, who received him seated on his throne, with the Empress Agrippina by his side. The prætorian guard were drawn up in line of battle on either side. First came the servants of the captive prince; then were borne the spoils of the vanquished Britons; these were followed by the brothers, the wife, and daughter of Caractacus, and last of all by Caractacus himself, calm and unsubdued by his misfortune.

Advancing to the throne, he pronounced the following remarkable discourse, which Tacitus has preserved for us:—"If I had had, O Cæsar, in prosperity, a prudence equal to my birth and fortune, I should have entered this city as a friend, and not as a captive; and possibly thou wouldest not have disdained the alliance of a man descended from illustrious ancestors, who gave laws to several nations. My fate this day appears as sad for me as it is glorious for thee. I had horses, soldiers, arms, and treasures; is it surprising that I should regret the loss of them? If it is thy will to command the universe, is it a reason we should voluntarily accept slavery? Had I yielded sooner, thy fortune and my glory would have been less, and oblivion would soon have followed my execution. If thou sparest my life, I shall be an eternal monument of thy clemency." To the honour of Claudius, he not only spared the life of his captive, but the lives of his brothers, wife, and daughter, and treated them with respect. Their chains were removed, and they expressed their thanks, not only to the emperor, but to Agrippina, whose influence is supposed, not without reason, to have been exerted in their favour.

The public life of Caractacus ended with his captivity; for the tradition that he afterwards returned to Britain, and ruled over a portion of the island, rests on so uncertain a foundation as to be unworthy of belief. The senate, in its pompous harangues, compared the subjection of this formidable chief to that of Syphax by Scipio, and decreed the honours of a triumph to his conqueror, Ostorius, who died, however, shortly afterwards, worn out by the perpetual attacks of the Silures.

Ostorius was succeeded in the government of Britain by Avitus Didius Gallus, who, unlike his warlike predecessor, sought to establish the Roman dominion in the island by fomenting internal dissension. He made an alliance with the perfidious mother-in-law of Caractacus, Cartismandua, Queen of the Brigantes, whose subjects had revolted. His government lasted but four years, during which period the armies of Rome made but little progress on the isle. Nero assigned the government of Britain to Veranius, who died a year afterwards, in a campaign he had undertaken against the Silures.

Suetonius Paulinus, who was despatched to Britain by Nero in 58, proved himself fully equal to the task he had undertaken. Hitherto the Britons had been excited to revolt by the exhortations of the Druids, whose principal sanctuary was in the island of Anglesea, which, up to the period of his government, had preserved its independence, and served as a refuge to the malcontents and vanquished. Of this important spot Suetonius resolved to obtain possession, as the most effectual means of crushing the spirit of resistance still existing amongst the people. By means of a number of flat-bottomed boats, which he had constructed for the purpose, he crossed the arm of the sea which separates Anglesea from Britain. Tacitus has left a vivid description of the effect produced upon the Romans on approaching the island: the army of the enemy drawn up like a living rampart on the shore, to oppose their landing; the women, in mournful robes of a sombre colour, rushing wildly along the sands, brandishing their torches and muttering imprecations; the Druids, with their arms extended in malediction. The invaders were appalled; and, but for the exhortations of their leaders, the expedition, in all probability, must have suffered a defeat. Excited by their reproaches, the standard-bearers advanced, and the army, ashamed to desert their eagles, followed them, striking madly with their swords, and crushing all who opposed them. Finally, they succeeded in surrounding the Britons, who perished, with their wives and children, in the fires which the Druids had commanded to be kindled for their hideous sacrifices. The victory was a terrible blow to the influence of the Druids, who never recovered their power in the island; and its consequences would have been even more severely felt, but for an insurrection which shortly afterwards broke out in that portion of Britain which had been reduced to the condition of a Roman colony.

The imposts were excessive, and exacted with rigour. Hundreds of distinguished families saw themselves reduced to indigence, and, consequently, to servitude. Their sons were torn from their hearths, and compelled to serve on the continent in the auxiliary cohorts. All these evils, great as they were, might have been borne, had not an outrage been added more infamous than any the insolent invaders had yet ventured to perpetrate: an outrage which filled the hearts of the Britons with fury, and drove them once more to rebellion. Prasutagus, a king of the nation of the Iceni, had for many years been the faithful ally of Rome; on his death, the better to ensure a portion of his inheritance to his family, he named the emperor and his daughters as his joint heirs. The Roman procurator, however, took possession of the whole in the name of his imperial master, a proceeding which naturally aroused the indignation of Boadicea, the widow of the deceased prince. Being a woman of resolute character, she complained bitterly of the spoliation, and for redress was not only beaten with rods like a slave, but her daughters were dishonoured before her eyes. On hearing of these indignities, the Iceni flew to arms; the Trinobantes and several other tribes followed their example, and a league was formed between them to recover their lost liberties.

The first object of their attack was the colony of veterans established at Camulodunum, where a temple, dedicated to Claudius, had been raised, the priests of which committed infamous exactions, under the pretence of thus honouring religion. It was affirmed, as is generally the case on the eve of any great event, that numerous omens preceded the catastrophe. The statue of Victory fell in the temple with its face upon the ground; fearful howlings were heard in the theatre; and it is even pretended that a picture of the colony in ruins had been seen floating in the waters of the Thames. The report of all these prodigies, which, if they really took place, were doubtless the contrivances of the Druids, froze the veterans with terror, and raised the courage of the Britons to the highest pitch. In the absence of Suetonius, the colonists demanded succour of the procurator, who sent them only 200 men, and those badly armed; and with this feeble reinforcement, the garrison shut themselves up in the temple.

With the cunning which seems peculiar to all semi-barbarous nations, the Britons continued to reassure their enemy of their pacific intentions. The consequence was that instead of raising a rampart and digging a ditch round the building, which they might easily have done, the Romans remained in a state of fancied security, neglecting even to send away their women and children, and such as from age and sickness were unable to bear arms. Suddenly the mask was thrown off. The insurgents, who had gained sufficient time to collect their forces and mature their plans, fell upon the colony, destroying everything before them, and sparing neither sex nor age. After a siege of several days, the temple was taken by assault, and the garrison put to the sword.

Emboldened by their success, the victors marched to meet Petillius Cerealis, who, at the head of the ninth legion, was hastening to the assistance of his countrymen. After a bloody battle, in which the Britons massacred all his infantry, the Roman lieutenant was compelled to seek refuge with his cavalry in the camp. Terrified at the disaster which his avarice and cruelty had caused, the procurator, Cato Decianus, fled to Gaul, followed by the maledictions of the inhabitants of the province on which he had brought so many evils.

Whilst engaged in the subjugation of the natives of Anglesea, Suetonius Paulinus received intelligence of the revolt of the Britons against the colonies of the eastern parts of the island. Immediately he set out on his march for London. This is the first mention which we have in history of this city by the title of Londinium—a city destined, in after years, to become the chief centre of political power and commercial enterprise in Europe; to rival, if not to eclipse, the most famous cities of antiquity in splendour and in influence. But the small force under his command was unable successfully to govern it against the fury of the native enemies, who eagerly panted for the destruction of a town which was at once the monument of Roman triumph and the stronghold of Roman tyranny. Anxious that his small army should not be destroyed in an attempt to defend what was hopeless, Suetonius resolved to retreat and give up the city to the plunder of the Britons. All such as were willing to leave it were taken into his army, and, amid the cries and lamentations of the inhabitants, the city was abandoned by the Roman troops. It was not long before the storm burst upon the wretched inhabitants, whom the insurgents massacred

BRITONS WITH CORACLES.

without pity or remorse, although the majority of them consisted of their own countrymen, against whom their rage appeared quite as much excited as against the Romans, on account of their submission to the common enemy. Seventy thousand are computed to have perished in the slaughter. Never before had such an indiscriminate destruction been witnessed in the island. Tacitus, in speaking of the Britons, says:—"They would neither take the vanquished prisoners, sell them, nor ransom their lives and liberties; but hastened to massacre, torture, and crucify them, as if to avenge themselves beforehand for the cruel punishments which the future had in store for them."

ROMAN SOLDIERS PASSING OVER A BRIDGE OF BOATS. *(From the Trajan Column.)*

Suetonius, uniting the fourteenth legion, the auxiliaries of the twenty-first, and the garrisons of the neighbouring towns, soon found himself at the head of 10,000 men; and with such an army no longer hesitated to meet the enemy, before whom he had hitherto deemed it advisable to retreat. With great skill he took up his position at the entrance of a narrow defile, his infantry in the centre, the cavalry forming the wings. The Britons, a countless multitude, advanced to battle without order or discipline, animated by the desire of vengeance and the hope of recovering their liberty. Before the struggle commenced, a chariot was seen, drawn slowly through their ranks; in it was a female of tall stature and dignified bearing, enveloped in the folds of a long mantle, a chain of gold round her waist, and her long hair floating to the ground. It was the outraged Boadicea, who, accompanied by her daughters, appealed to the courage of her countrymen. "The Britons," she cried, "are accustomed to fight under the command of a woman; there is no question now of avenging my illustrious ancestors from whom I am descended, my kingdom, or my plundered treasures. Avenge me as a simple woman, as one of your own class. Avenge my outraged liberty; my body torn by the scourge; and the dishonoured innocence of my daughters! The Romans respect neither the age of our old men nor the chastity of our children; their avarice is insatiable. Are not our persons taxed? do we not pay even for the permission to bear our heads? Nor is that all; the tax must be paid for those who cease to live. It was reserved for the execrable tyranny of the Romans," she added, "to raise a revenue from the dead. But there are just gods, avenging gods. A legion that dared oppose us has perished; the rest of the Romans conceal themselves, or already think of flight. They cannot hear without trembling the cries of so many thousand men; how, then, will they support the shock of your blows? Consider your countless battalions, reflect on the motives of this war, and you will understand that the day has arrived on which we must vanquish or die. Such will be, such shall be the fate of one woman; let men live slaves if they will."

Animated by these inspiring words, the recollection of their injuries, and the blood they had already shed, the Britons commenced the combat. The legion, with their eyes fixed upon their chief, waited the signal. It was given, and they advanced in a triangular battalion; the auxiliaries followed the impetuous movement, and the squadrons charged with their lances in rest. Nothing could resist that fearful shock. The immense multitude was put to flight, but the chariots containing their wives and children, who had followed to be spectators of their victory, barred the way. The victors spared neither women, children, nor animals. The carnage was fearful: 80,000 Britons remained dead upon the plain. Boadicea, the witness and victim of this sad defeat, kept the promise she had made, not to fall into the power of the Romans, but ended her life by poison. This victory re-established the reputation of the Roman arms; but it was not permitted to Suetonius to complete the task he had begun; he was shortly afterwards recalled to Rome, to answer charges brought against him by his enemies, and, although acquitted, he lost the favour of a prince in whose reign no man of celebrity was spared.

In the reign of Vespasian, his general, Cerealis, reduced the Brigantes in the years A.D. 69 and 70, and his successor, Julius Frontinus, conquered the Silures. But it was reserved to another general to achieve the conquest of a proud and warlike nation, and to render it durable by the qualities of justice and moderation. The great man who gave this useful lesson to the world was Agricola, named governor of Britain in the year 78 of the Christian era. He had already visited the island, having served in the army as tribune under the command of Suetonius Paulinus, who esteemed and treated him as a friend. His first step was to repress the revolt of the Ordovices, whom he punished with rigour; he next renewed the attack on the island of Anglesea, which he took, owing to the courage of his German auxiliaries, who, not having vessels at their command, swam over the arm of the sea which divides it from Britain. In the following campaign he extended the limits of the Roman government to the Tay, leaving strong garrisons at all the important points. In his fourth campaign Agricola crossed the Forth to the southern frontier of Caledonia, or the Scottish Highlands, and erected, to repress the invasion of the warlike inhabitants, a line of fortifications between the Forth and the Clyde.

But it is as an administrator or civil governor that Agricola chiefly merits our praise. He lessened, as much as possible, the tribute levied on the vanquished Britons by an equitable adjustment, suppressed the most onerous monopolies, and multiplied the means of transport and commerce. Having succeeded in gaining the good opinion of the people he was called to rule over by his valour and equity, the governor next tried to keep them peaceable by inculcating a taste for the arts and pleasures. He encouraged the erection of temples and forums, aided all public works by grants from the treasury, and caused the sons of the principal chiefs and princes to be instructed in the sciences. Gradually those who had disdained the language of the conquerors devoted themselves to its attainment. They assumed the toga, and affected the tastes, and in too many instances the vices, of their masters.

Titus, who had succeeded to the throne of his father, Vespasian, reigned but two years, and left the empire to Domitian, who, like most men of suspicious nature, felt jealous lest any other name should become greater than his own. He did not venture, however, to recall Agricola, who was permitted to pursue his career of glory, and, in the fifth year of his government, advanced with his legions to the west, as far as the coast opposite to Ireland. A statesman, administrator, and soldier, like the illustrious pupil of Suetonius, must have comprehended the advantage of conquering the sister island; the facilities which it would afford to the increasing commerce between Spain, Gaul, and Britain: he renounced, however, the enterprise from some unknown reason, and Ireland, for nearly a thousand years longer, preserved her independence.

He now turned his attention to the people north of the Forth, whom Tacitus calls the Caledonians. In his first campaign against them, which commenced in the sixth year of his government, the Romans experienced a severe check, as the enemy nearly forced their camp, and were only repulsed after causing considerable damage. In the seventh and last year of his residence on the island, Agricola made his great attempt to subdue these ferocious nations, and his preparations were worthy his great military reputation and the magnitude of the task he had undertaken. He joined to his legions and auxiliaries from the

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"THE ROMANS CAUSE A WALL TO BE BUILT FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE SOUTH."

After the Wall Cartoon by W. Bell Scott, R.H.A., at Wallington.
By permission of the Right Hon. Sir George O. Trevelyan.

continent cohorts of Britons, drawn from the southern portion of the island; and supplied his army by means of a numerous fleet, which sailed along the coast.

The Romans advanced without encountering any serious obstacle as far as the Grampians, where the Caledonians, under the celebrated chief Galgacus, were drawn up to oppose them, 30,000 strong. The first ranks, consisting of the bravest of the tribes, occupied the level plain; the next and secondary ones covered the sides of the mountain, rising in half-circles one above another, as in a vast amphitheatre. At the sight of the Caledonians, it became difficult to keep the Romans in the entrenchments, and Agricola, seeing their impatience for battle, exhorted them to conquest. "Defeat itself," he said, "will not be without glory; but you will not yield. The bravest of the Britons have been already overcome; those who remain are cowardly and timid, as you behold on the heights which you will illustrate by a memorable victory. Put an end," he concluded, "to so many expeditions, and add another great day to fifty years of triumph!" At these words the ardour of his soldiers could no longer be repressed. They quitted the camp, and their brave leader ranged them in order of battle: the auxiliaries on foot, to the number of 8,000, in the centre; 3,000 horsemen formed the wings; the legions being held in reserve. The first line of the Caledonians descended to the plain, which trembled beneath the galloping of the horses and the rolling of the war-chariots. Agricola, seeing the superiority of the enemy in point of numbers, deployed his ranks, resolved neither to fly nor yield. Favoured by their position, the barbarians had the advantage as long as they fought at a distance with javelins and arrows; which became useless, however, when, the Roman general having commanded the auxiliaries to engage man to man, they rushed to the encounter with their long sharp swords; another body assailed the rocks, which they carried by assault, and the Caledonians retreated behind their horsemen and chariots; whilst the Roman cavalry, falling on the confused mass, completed the rout. The plain soon became one wide scene of carnage; 10,000 Caledonians perished; whilst their enemy lost only 360 men. The victors passed the night in drunkenness and pillage, whilst the vanquished, men and women, wandered about the country, yielding to despair. In their rage they destroyed their habitations, to prevent them from being plundered by the Romans.

Agricola rendered an account of his victory to the emperor, in terms remarkable for their modesty and simplicity. The jealous Domitian received his letter with apparent joy, but secret wrath: with his usual cunning, however, he dissembled his real sentiments till time had weakened the enthusiasm of the people and the favour of the army for the man he hated. Gradually a report gained ground that the victorious general was to be recalled from the scene of his triumphs, to take the command in Syria, and Domitian demanded for him the honours of a triumph. The victor dared not, however, present himself to the acclamations of the people, for fear of exciting the jealousy of his imperial master. He entered Rome privately, and by night, and presented himself before the tyrant, who received him coldly and in silence. He soon became confounded with the crowd of courtiers, and only escaped from the peril of his glory by appearing himself to forget it.

Little is known of the state of Britain from Domitian to Hadrian, when many of the nations who had been subject to the yoke of Rome began to show signs of impatience, and all the cares of the new emperor were to confirm the peace of the world. He re-established the system of Augustus, abandoned the conquests of Trajan, and limited the empire in the east to the Euphrates. He visited the provinces, and arrived at last in Britain, where he corrected many abuses, and built, in order to repress the incursions of the Caledonians, the celebrated wall (a description of which will be found in the following chapter) which bore his name. It extended upwards of eighty miles, from the north of the Tyne to the Solway (A.D. 120). Rome thus abandoned without a struggle the country included between the wall of Hadrian and that of Agricola, an extent of about 100 miles; a portion of it, however, was regained under Antoninus Pius, the adopted son and successor of Hadrian, in 139, when a rampart was constructed between the Forth and the Clyde; it was subsequently strengthened by the Emperor Severus, in 208, and hence is generally called by his name.

During the third century the empire was agitated by numerous competitions for the purple, but it was somewhat appeased on the accession of Diocletian. The legions in Britain now adopted the practice of setting up emperors of their own. One of them, Carausius, reigned from 287 to 294, and was only got rid of by assassination. The murderer, Allectus, attempted to succeed him, and maintained himself in the island till defeated by Constantius, who was created a sub-emperor, with the title of Cæsar; thus Britain was once more united to the empire. The victor made himself loved by the Britons, by his equitable and wise administration, and continued to reside amongst them till the abdication of Diocletian. At his death, which occurred in York in 306, he recommended to the army, who were devoted to him, his son, the celebrated Constantine, who was immediately saluted emperor and Augustus. He was beloved by the Britons, being the son of a British mother, the "fair Helena of York."

Constantine was a Christian, but, before his accession, had been compelled to execute the imperial commands against the followers of that faith. Many of the Romans, who had received the new religion, and fled from the persecutions of Claudius and Nero, found refuge in Britain, where the imperial edicts were less rigorously obeyed, till the persecution of Diocletian, when the churches throughout the empire were ordered to be closed, and the refusal of the new sect to offer sacrifice to the gods of Rome was punished with death. Much as Constantine condemned, he dared not annul the impious mandate he had received. Ascending his tribunal, before which the principal officers of his army and household had been summoned, he read aloud the edict, and added that those who professed the new faith must decide on abandoning either their faith or their employments. Many, doubtless, chose the former alternative; since we are told that the prince, in great indignation, dismissed the apostates from his service, observing that it was impossible for him to trust those who had denied their convictions. His lieutenants, however, were less scrupulous, and Christian blood was shed to maintain the State religion of the empire. Alban, the protomartyr, as the latter designation implies, was the first who suffered; and the names of Julius and Aaron, citizens of Caerleon, upon the Usk, have also been handed down to posterity as two of the earliest victims. But on the accession of Constantine to the throne, religious toleration was restored throughout the empire. Christianity now made rapid progress in the island. A hierarchy became established, and at the Council of Arles, in 314, three English bishops assisted—those of York, London, and Camulodunum.

After the death of Constantine the Caledonians disappear and are replaced by the Picts. There is every reason to believe, however, that these are only two names for the same race, the Picts (*picti*) being the "painted" or "tattooed" men. The Scots, another race of northern invaders, were of different origin: they originally came over from Ireland, where they inhabited the eastern coasts, settled in the neighbourhood of Loch Lomond, and made an alliance with the nearest tribes, for the purpose of ravaging the possessions of the Britons. Both these peoples were of Celtic origin, and the Scots, or Milesians (from Lat. *miles*, a soldier), were the dominant race in Ireland. Other plunderers also attacked the weakened empire, of whom the most important were the Saxons, of whom we shall read more later on.

They were severely chastised by Theodosius, who visited Britain in 343. He succeeded in expelling them from the Roman provinces and driving them back to their wild retreats.

Maximus, who afterwards assumed the title of Augustus, while in Britain, carried on the war against the Picts and Scots with unrelenting severity; his ambition, however, led him to attempt the conquest of the whole western empire, in which he failed, and was beheaded at Aquileia. His army, comprising a large majority of Britons, never returned to their native country, which consequently was left in a great measure defenceless. So favourable an opportunity did not escape the vigilance of the Picts and Scots, who made successive inroads in the island, and returned to their mountain fastnesses laden with plunder.

The power of Rome was now shaken by the irruption of barbarians of various denominations, who, issuing from the east and north, depopulated her fairest provinces. Assailed at so many points at once, it seemed as if the nations of the earth had been let loose to uproot her supremacy, and break the shackles which for so many ages had fettered the greater part of the world. The Goths, led by Alaric, crossing the Julian Alps, swept like a torrent over the fertile plains of Italy. Other German tribes devastated Gaul, and the Roman legions in Britain, deprived of all communication with the Emperor Honorius, fell back upon their custom of electing an emperor for themselves.

The first whom they selected for the purple was Marcus, whom his soldiers, very soon after elevating him to the imperial dignity, put to death; after him came an adventurer named Constantine, who paid for his short-lived dignity with his life. A third usurper arose in Gerontius.

When the Emperor Honorius heard of this revolution, he wrote to the states of Britain, to say that they must provide for their safety, and govern themselves; by which concession the rule of Rome in the island was looked on as at an end. The Britons, in despair, rose and drove out their civil governors. About 367 years after the

ROMAN SOLDIERS LEAVING BRITAIN. (*See p.* 18.)

landing of Plautius, the evacuation of Britain was complete. No doubt to a large number of the Imperial soldiers this withdrawal meant the severance of many tender ties, and some of the leave-takings must have been painful enough.

How frequently do we read, in the history of the world, of a nation urged by an irresistible, though unknown, impulse, to pursue the path of conquest, not for their own advantage, but for the ultimate benefit of the people whom they subject! Such was the result of the Roman invasion of Britain, which proved neither profitable nor advantageous to the conquerors. Appianus of Alexandria, who flourished A.D. 123, wrote a history of all the nations which Rome had subdued, in twenty-four books. In this work he says: "The Romans have penetrated into Britain, and taken possession of the greater and better part of the island; but they do not desire the rest, because that which they already possess is not of the slightest benefit to them." The historian was right, for despite the taxes, the produce of the mines, and the exportation of corn, the island could never have been a source of great profit to the victors; notwithstanding which, we trace them, urged by a resistless combination of events, progressing step by step, till the greater part of the country was subdued.

For nearly a century, the portion of Britain which had submitted to their yoke formed but a single province; it was first separated into two during the reign of the Emperor Severus. This division was afterwards extended to five, the positions of which are not very accurately determined.

1st. *Flavia Cæsariensis*, which is thought to have consisted of the western portion of the island.

2nd. *Britannia Prima*, the country between the Thames and the Humber.

3rd. *Britannia Secunda*, lying between the Severn and the sea, now known by the name of Wales.

4th. *Maxima Cæsariensis*, lying to the north of the two preceding ones, extending to the Wall of Hadrian, between the Tyne and the Solway.

5th. *Valentia*, comprising the lands from the Wall of Hadrian to the Forth and Clyde.

Each of these provinces, before the period when anarchy set in, had a separate ruler, subject to the governor-general of Britain, who was named by the emperor under the title of vicar. He exercised all but sovereign authority, and united in his hands both the military and judicial power. Under him was a procurator, or quæstor, who levied the taxes, and administered the revenues of the island. The principal sources of revenue were a poll tax, a tax on funerals and inheritances, on slaves, on all public sales, and an impost upon cattle and agricultural produce. The tax upon cattle, which was called *scriptura*, from the collectors visiting the pastures and writing down lists of the number and kind which each estate nourished, was particularly oppressive to the Britons, and one of the most frequent causes of revolt. In addition to these burdens, the Romans levied imposts upon merchandise, either imported or exported, which formed a considerable item in their revenue, the commerce between the empire and Britain having been greatly extended. Agriculture also made immense progress in the island, in which cities of considerable importance were built. Of these the most important, in a commercial point of view, were Clausentum and London. In the second century, Britain contained upwards of a hundred cities; the principal were London, Colchester, Bath, Gloucester, York, Chester, Lincoln, and Chesterfield; most of them were built upon lands which the emperors had bestowed upon the veterans of those legions whose descendants formed the greater part of the population. The larger cities, about ten in number, enjoyed the *jus Latii*, which conferred, amongst other privileges, the right of electing their magistrates. The inferior ones, called stipendiaries, paid tribute to the emperor, and were governed by officers under the authority of the prefect. It is extremely improbable, however, that any real amalgamation of the two races ever took place, or that Roman civilisation left any permanent effects upon the British character. The Romans were in fact, from first to last, an army of occupation among a hostile people.

CHAPTER II.

ROMAN REMAINS IN BRITAIN.

Two Varieties of Masonry—Dover Castle—Richborough Castle—Newport Gate, Lincoln—Hadrian's Wall—Its Direction and Construction—Outworks—Ornamental Detail—Roman Roads and Camps.

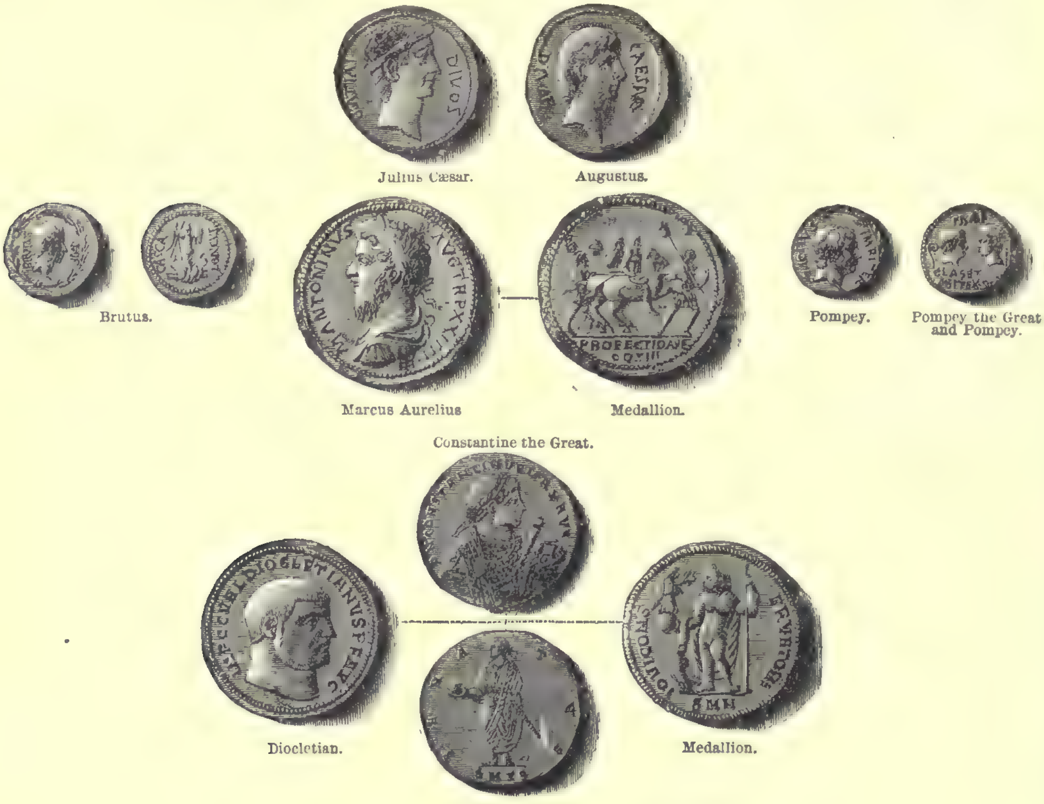
THE remains of Roman architecture in Britain, though numerous, do not exhibit any perfect buildings, and the workmanship in general is not equal to that of the Continental remains. The buildings seem to have been inferior and of smaller dimensions, and there is very little of ornamental detail to be found, except the tesselated pavements, of which many fine examples yet remain in the Roman villas which have been discovered from time to time in various parts of the kingdom.

The principal places where Roman remains are now to be seen are Lincoln, Dover Castle, St. Albans, Richborough Castle, Porchester, York, Cirencester, Leicester, and Colchester. But in all these there is little ornamentation or detail left, the remains consisting chiefly of plain walls, the masonry of which has peculiarities of character which mark its date. Of the masonry there are two principal varieties; the first, and that which is most readily recognised, consists of alternate layers or bands of pebbles, or small stones embedded in mortar, and tiles or flat stones. These bands consisted of three or four courses of tiles or stones laid through the wall, and were placed at two or three feet from each other, the intermediate spaces being raised with a sort of cement composed of mortar and pebbles, or sometimes rag-stones, or such materials as the country afforded. In this manner are built the Mint wall at Lincoln, the Jewry wall at Leicester, and the walls at Verulam (St. Albans), Porchester, Richborough, York, Pevensey, Chesterford, Colchester, Wroxeter, and Silchester.

The other variety consists of walls formed of square stones or ashlar, as the Roman wall in Northumberland. These are sometimes very large, as in the north gate (or Newport gate), Lincoln. Smaller kinds of ashlar, of almost cubical blocks, occur in the multangular tower and other buildings at York. The mortar used in all these walls is in general mixed with pounded brick.

It will not be necessary here to go into a description of all these buildings, but a few of the most remarkable may be mentioned; one of the most curious and interesting of these is the Pharos in the Castle of Dover, though it has undergone much alteration, particularly in the fifteenth century. "Wherever the outer casing is worn away, or has been removed by violence, the walls exhibit the usual mode of Roman building with the material of the districts; in this case with tufa or stalactite, brought perhaps from the opposite coast of France, and flint, with layers of large flat Roman bricks, some of them two feet long, each layer two courses deep, placed regularly and horizontally in the walls at equal intervals, or nearly so. No less than eight of these layers of brickwork are visible on the south-east side; other layers are apparently concealed by the external and subsequent casing of flint and stone, and where the casing of flint is perfect, quoins of stone appear at the angles. This tower is externally octagonal in form; internally the space enclosed forms a square. The doorway, recently blocked, is on the south side, and the arch, turned and faced with a single row of large Roman bricks, springs from a kind of rude impost moulding, somewhat resembling that of the Roman gateway at Lincoln; but this is not now visible. In the interior, the constructive features of the original Roman work were, before the entrance was closed up, far more visible and perfect than on the exterior, and the facing of the bricks was quite smooth; yet the effect of the alterations is here also plainly apparent, and the original windows, the arches of which are turned with Roman brick, have been filled up with flint masonry. Both the external as well as the internal facings of the entrance doorway on the south side were, a few years back, when the interior could be readily examined, far from perfect. Over this doorway were two windows, one above the other, each arched with brickwork. On the east side of the tower is a rather lofty arch faced with stone, the soffit of which, however, appears to have been turned with brick; this probably communicated with some building adjoining. Over this arch is a window now blocked up."

Richborough Castle, in Kent, is another of the most important of the Roman remains in England. It is a large parallelogram, including within it an area of five acres. The walls to the height of six feet are more than eleven feet thick, and above that ten feet eight inches; and the masonry is thus described by the Rev. C. H. Hartshorne:—"At Richborough, commencing at the ground, there are on the north side, where the masonry is displayed in its most perfect state, first of all, four courses of flint in their natural form, then three courses dressed; to these succeed two courses of binding tile, and then they rise above each other in the following order: seven courses of ashlar and two of tile; seven courses of ashlar and two of tile; seven courses of ashlar and two of tile; again, seven courses of ashlar and two of tile; eight courses of ashlar and two of tile; nine courses of ashlar. The extreme height of this wall is twenty-three feet two inches, and its thickness ten feet eight inches."



Julius Cæsar. Augustus.

Brutus. Marcus Aurelius Medallion. Pompey. Pompey the Great and Pompey.

Constantine the Great.

Diocletian. Medallion.

Medallion.

COINS OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC AND THE EMPIRE.

One of the most perfect and most interesting of Roman remains is the archway at Lincoln, called Newport Gate, and styled by Dr. Stukely "the noblest remnant of this sort in Britain." It was the north gate of the Roman city of Lindum, and from it a military way, called the High Street, leading to Winteringham, on the Humber, may now be traced. This still forms the principal entrance into the city from the north. It is supposed to have had a large central arch, and two smaller ones at the sides, that on the west having been destroyed, the larger being about fifteen feet, and the lesser ones seven feet in width. It is built of squared stone, out as far as the top of the arch, of remarkably large size. It is without ornament of any kind, but is said by Rickman to have had architrave and impost mouldings. That of the architrave, if it ever existed, has entirely disappeared; but there is, or was lately, a small portion of the impost moulding remaining, on the west side of the large arch. The masonry, which exhibits none of the usual binds of tiles so frequent in other buildings, will be best understood by reference to the engraving on page 21.

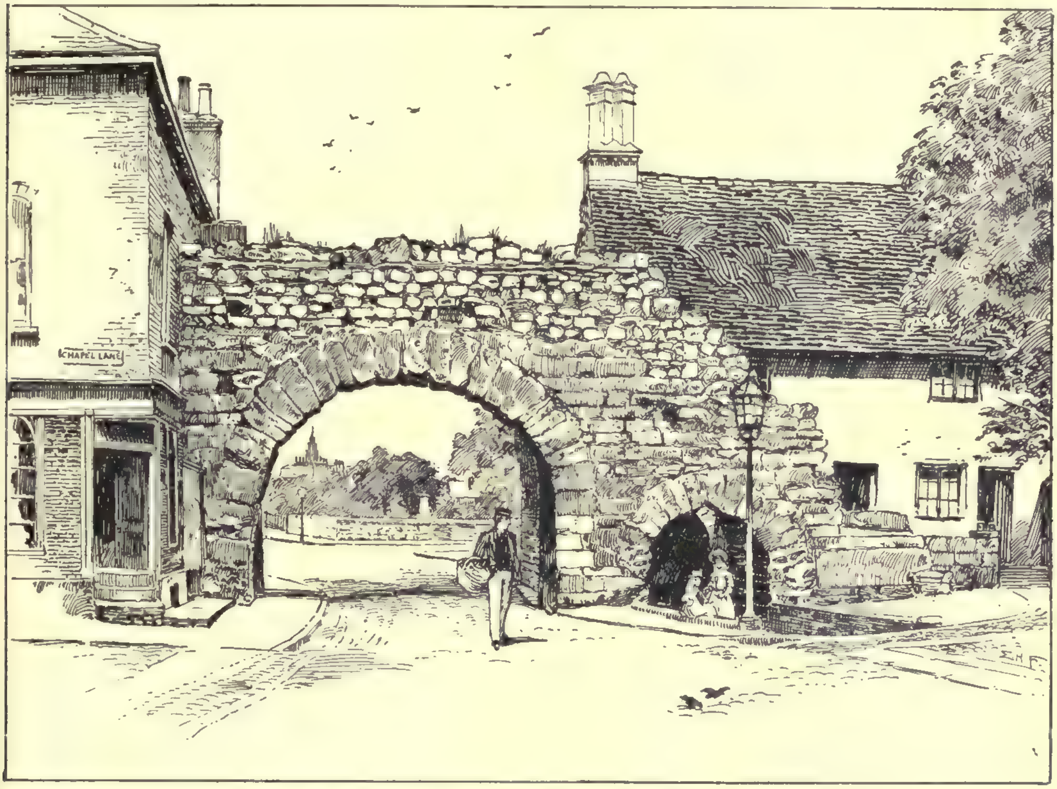
There is another piece of Roman work in the neighbourhood of Newport Gate, which is a piece of wall built with ashlar and binding courses of tile. It is known as the Mint Wall.

But perhaps the most interesting of all the Roman remains in Britain is the Roman Wall, which reaches across the narrow part of the island in Northumberland and Cumberland, commencing at Wallsend, on the Tyne, running through Newcastle and Carlisle, and terminating at Bowness, in Cumberland. A most interesting and fully illustrated account of this wall has been given to the world by the Rev. J. Collingwood Bruce, from whose work we have (by permission) copied the two illustrations on p. 22.

Arguments have been brought forward by some antiquaries to show that the wall and the vallum by which it is accompanied belong to two different periods; but Dr. Bruce contends that they are both to be considered as forming part of the great engineering work of Hadrian. It consists of a stone wall, or *murus*, and a wall of earth, or *vallum*. These two run always near together, but not always parallel. The vallum is likewise rather the shorter, terminating at Newcastle on the east, and at Drumburgh, about three miles from Bowness, the western extremity of the wall.

"The most striking feature in the plan, both of the murus and the vallum, is the determinate manner in which they pursue their straightforward course. The vallum makes fewer deviations from a right line than the stone wall; but as the wall traverses higher ground, this remarkable tendency is more easily detected in it than in the other. Shooting over the country, in its onward course, it only swerves from a straight line to take in its route the boldest elevations. So far from declining a hill, it uniformly selects one.

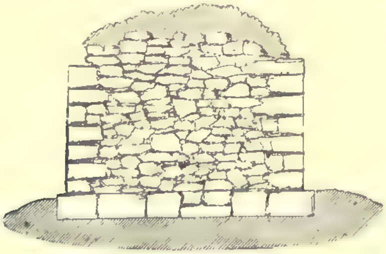
"For nineteen miles out of Newcastle the road to Carlisle runs upon the foundations of the wall, and during the summer months its dusty surface contrasts well with the surrounding verdure. Often will the traveller, after attaining some of the steep acclivities of his path, observe the road stretching for miles in an undeviating course to the east and the west of him, resembling, as Hutton expresses it, a white ribbon on a green ground. But if it never moves from a right line, except to occupy the highest points, it never fails to seize them as they occur, no matter how often it is compelled, with this view, to change its direction. It



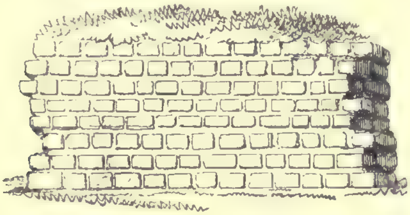
NEWPORT GATE, LINCOLN. (*From a Photograph by Skill, Lincoln.*)

never bends in a curve, but always at an angle. Hence, along the craggy precipices between Sewingshields and Thirlwall, it is obliged to pursue a remarkably zigzag course; for it takes in its range, with the utmost pertinacity, every projecting rock."

Though no part of the wall now retains its full height, it has been calculated that when entire it was about eighteen or nineteen feet, including the parapet. Its general thickness is about eight feet, though it varies in different parts from six feet to ten and a half feet. It is "throughout the whole of its length accompanied on its northern margin by a broad and deep fosse, which, by increasing the comparative height of the wall, added greatly to its strength. This portion of the barrier may yet be traced, with trifling interruptions, from sea to sea."



TRANSVERSE SECTION OF THE ROMAN WALL.

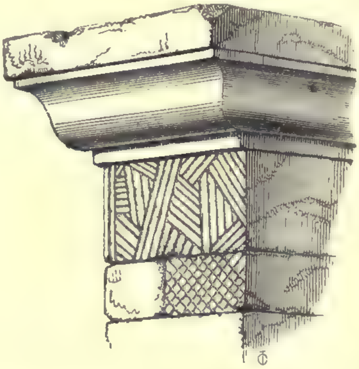


LONGITUDINAL SECTION OF THE ROMAN WALL.

The masonry of the wall is somewhat peculiar; it has none of the binding courses of tile which are, in many parts of England and on the Continent, so characteristic of Roman work. No tiles are used in the construction. The outer face of the wall on both sides is formed of squared blocks of stone, usually called ashlar, and the interior of rubble, embedded in mortar. These blocks are about eight or nine inches thick, and ten or eleven wide; their length is considerably more, sometimes as much as twenty-two inches, and tapering to the opposite end, which was firmly bedded into the rubble. The whole rested on a course of large foundation stones.

On or near the wall were placed, at tolerably regular intervals, stationary camps, or "stations," about seventeen or eighteen in number; and at still shorter intervals, that is, about a Roman mile from each other, were placed smaller towers, called, from this circumstance, "mile castles." These are in general placed against the south side of the wall, and had mostly only one entrance, which was from the south; but in the most perfect of those at Gawfields there are two entrances, one on the south, and another through the main wall on the north.

More of ornamental detail seems to have been bestowed on the architecture of these stations and mile castles than on the wall, which was intended for defence. The walls have moulded basements and cornices, of which there are woodcuts on this page and the next; the one from Vendalana (Chesterholm) exhibits also the peculiar ornamentation of the surface of the stone work, which is produced by cutting lines in various directions, either lozenge-wise or parallel, horizontal, upright, oblique, or zigzag-wise, thus producing considerable variety. In the extremely interesting Saxon crypt at Hexham, which was built out of the ruins of the Roman Wall, many varieties of this peculiar tooling, or "broaching," occur, along with ornamental mouldings, &c., and inscribed slabs, one of which has been cut to form the semi-circular head of a doorway. The beautiful fragment of a capital also given was found in the station of Cilurnum (now Walwick Chesters). It has probably belonged to the portico of a temple. It appears to be a late variety of Corinthian or composite. It serves to show that there must have been considerable expense bestowed on these stations, which were, in fact, military cities, in which the commanders resided. The doorway from the station of Bird-Oswald is valuable as showing a peculiar form of door-head, cut out of a solid stone. It



CORNICE FROM VENDALANA (CHESTERHOLM).

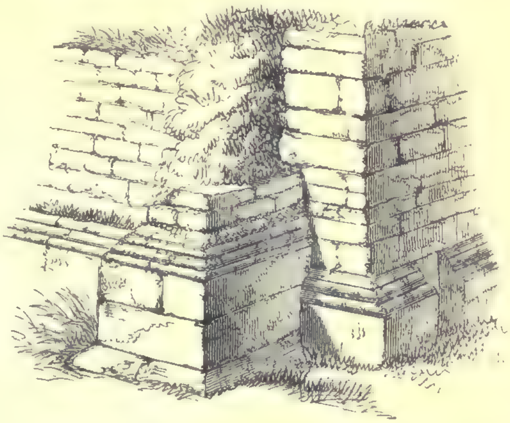
forms the entrance to the guard-chamber from the gateway of the station.

The Roman altars, sculptured fragments, inscribed stones, coins, implements of war, articles of personal ornament, and utensils for domestic use, which have been found along the line of the wall, are extremely numerous. But far more striking memorials of Agricola and his great successors in Britain are the Roman roads. Easy means of communication were, of course, a necessity for the Romans, dwelling, as they did, as a military garrison among a people notorious for their propensity to break into wild rebellion at a moment's notice; and hence the country was traversed by a complete system of roads leading from station to station. The method of their construction varied, but they were invariably raised above the surface of the country, and ran in an almost straight line regardless of hill and valley. The more important roads were very elaborately constructed with a foundation of hard earth, a bed of large stones, sometimes two more layers of stones and mortar, and above all the causeway paved with stones. The four most important roads were Watling Street, the Foss, Icknield Street, and Ermine Street. Of these, Watling Street ran from London to Wroxeter (Uriconium), and thence was continued into Wales, while part of the same system connected London with Dover. The Foss ran from the sea-coast, at Seaton in Devonshire, to Lincoln, with a continuation known as the High Street to the Humber. The Icknield way started from near Bury and ran to Wantage, and thence to Cirencester and Gloucester. Ermine Street ran through the Fens from London to Lincoln. These by no means exhaust the Roman roads, traces of which are to be found in almost every neighbourhood of England, but they are the "four Roman roads" so frequently mentioned in the legislation of the Middle Ages.

CAPITAL FROM CILURNUM (WALWICK CHESTERS).

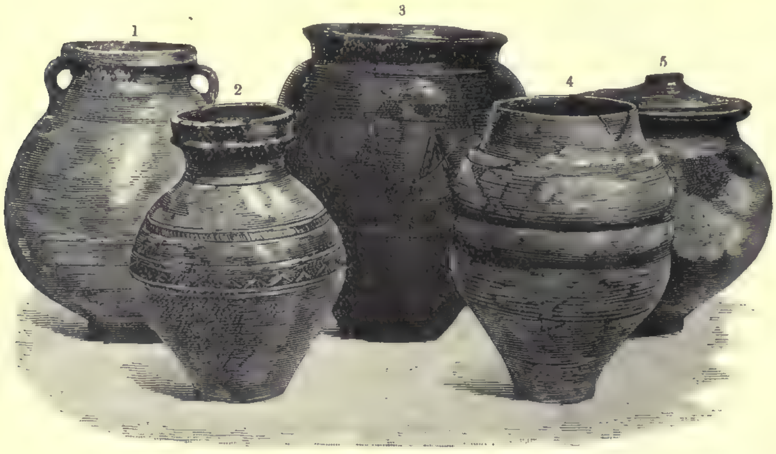
DOORWAY FROM BIRD-OSWALD.

ROMAN MASONRY AT COLCHESTER.


BASEMENT OF STATION ON THE ROMAN WALL.

Equally numerous are the remains of Roman camps, constructed with great engineering skill. Even when it was necessary to remain stationary for a very brief period, the Romans were accustomed to surround the space to be occupied by the soldiers' tents by an earthen rampart with stakes at the top (*agger* or *vallum*), which was in turn surrounded by a fosse or trench (*fossa*), usually nine feet deep and twelve broad. The spot selected was always one that commended itself from its defensive capacities, and therefore could not be overlooked, and had a command of water. The streets were sometimes as much as a hundred feet broad, with a public meeting-place or *forum* near the general's tent, which was usually pitched on the highest ground. There was a vacant space of two hundred feet between the tents and the ramparts called the *intervallum.* The shape of the camp in later times varied according to the nature of the ground, although in the days of the Roman republic it was as a rule rectangular. Of these temporary camps the most perfect is that situated near Kirkboddo, five miles to the south-east of Forfar. It was probably constructed by Agricola; all its six gates exist, and the entrenchment, even now, seems to have lost but little of its original height. It is about two thousand two hundred and eighty feet in length, and one thousand and eighty in breadth; and, apparently because it was necessary to find lodging for more men than the camp was originally intended to hold, there is a *procestrium* or enclosure without the south-east angle of about one hundred thousand square feet. Permanent camps, which were smaller than the temporary camps, soon lost their original features and grew into towns.

The establishment of an infirmary (*valetudinarium*), a farriery (*veterinarium*), and a forge (*fabrica*) within the rampart were quickly followed by the settlement of a civilian population, and the birth of trades and industries. In many of the English towns, which by the termination *cester* or *chester* or the prefix *caer* betray their Roman origin, hardly a trace of the original Roman camp is to be found, but during the period of the Roman occupation of Britain the military element in them was probably in the ascendant.



ROMAN URNS FOUND IN ENGLAND. (*From the British Museum.*)

1. Urn of yellow pottery—height, 12½ in.; greatest diameter, 13 in. 2. Urn of grey pottery found at Colchester—11½ × 9. 3. Urn of red and grey pottery, found at Littleton Farm—13 × 12. 4. Urn of grey pottery, found in Huntingdonshire—height, 11½ in.; width at mouth 4¾ in. 5. Urn of yellow pottery, found in the Lea—height, 10½; greatest diameter, 10.

GLASTONBURY ABBEY. *(See p. 31.)*

CHAPTER III.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE ENGLISH KINGDOMS AND THEIR CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY.

The Jutes, Angles, and Saxons—Their Village Communities –Larger Combinations, Gradations of Rank—Morality and Religion —Hengist and Horsa found the Kingdom of Kent—The Kingdoms of Sussex, Wessex and Essex The Anglian Kingdoms Mercia—The Welsh—Gregory and St. Augustine—Augustine and Kent Conversion of Northumbria—England becomes Christian—The Greatness of Mercia—King Offa.

After the departure of the Romans, the Britons were left to contend as best they could against the hordes of invaders who pressed upon them from the north, and on the eastern coast from overseas. The Saxons reappeared, and were accompanied by the kindred nations known as the Jutes and Angles. It is from this last nation that England takes her name, the land of the Angles, or English, and we shall soon cease to talk of Britain.

The Angles, Jutes, and Saxons formed a confederacy of tribes dwelling at the mouth of the Elbe, in the district known now-a-days as Schleswig-Holstein. They were of German race, so that the well-known description of that country and people given by Tacitus in the *Germania* applies to them, and is, moreover, confirmed in a remarkable way by what we know of their institutions and customs after they had conquered Britain. Perhaps the most striking feature of the society of our forefathers is that they had no towns. They dwelt in village communities, as the rural inhabitants of India do at the present day, and we are able from other sources to form a very exact idea of the way in which these communities were constituted. The land belonged to the whole of the little society, and the district occupied by it was known as the Mark. In the centre was the village. Beyond the village lay the arable land, in which each member of the village had a share, but this he could only cultivate in the same way as his neighbours. These shares were frequently redistributed, so that no man might permanently hold a more fertile portion than his neighbour, and the right to leave property by will was strictly limited. The head man of the village was elected by the community. Beyond the village came the common pasture land, into which the cattle of the community were turned to feed as they pleased; and farther still came the waste or belt of woodland or moor which separated one village from the next.

The village, called the *vicus* by Tacitus, was the administrative unit; but, for purposes of common defence, a neighbourhood of villages was combined into a district, or *pagus*, corresponding to what, after the English had settled in Britain, was known as the *hundred*, that is, the territory occupied by a hundred heads of families. Its chief is called by Tacitus the *princeps*, who is known in later times as the *alderman*, that is, the "older," and therefore more reverenced, man. A union of *pagi* formed a tribe, but our forefathers had not yet advanced to the formation of a nation. In war the hosts were led by generals, called *duces* by Tacitus, and probably elected by the *principes* of the different districts. The confederacy had as yet no kings; kingship was the result of the conquest of the foreign country of Britain, the victorious general deriving an immense accession of authority from the vast quantities of land which fell to his disposal.

Free as were their institutions, our forefathers recognised nevertheless gradations of rank. There was the *eorl* (earl), or man of noble birth. Then came the *ceorl*, or churl, a term which has now become one of contempt, but which then signified the freeman who was entitled to his share of the common land. Lowest in the social scale came the *laet*, or landless man, who cultivated the soil for his lord. It is improbable that slavery existed to any considerable extent before the conquest of Britain, when the conquered, if not exterminated, sank into a position to which death must have been preferable. Every man above the rank of *laet* was free in theory; but the origins of dependent relationship are seen in the institution called by Tacitus the *Comitatus*, and by the English the *Gefolge* or *Gesith*. This was the bodyguard of the *princeps*, who fought round him in battle, and over whose interests he watched, probably rewarding them with grants of land whenever a permanent conquest or occupation was effected.

The morality of the Germans is said by Tacitus to have been very high. "They are almost the only barbarians who are content with one wife; there being, however, a few exceptions among them who contract more than one marriage, not from motives of passion, but on account of their nobility of birth." "Good customs," he says in another place, "are of greater influence there than good laws elsewhere;" and much respect was paid to women. Justice was rude, as might be expected, every man being his own avenger; but, even in the earliest times, murder might be atoned for by the payment of a money fine called by the English the *wergild*, which was graduated according to the rank of the person slain.

Our ancestors were heathens, and worshipped gods whose names are preserved in some of the days of the week. *Woden*, the god of wars, has given his name to Wednesday; *Thor*, the god of thunder, to Thursday; *Friga*, the goddess (and wife of Odin), to Friday. Tuesday is called after *Tew*, the god of night; the attributes of *Sætern*, after whom Saturday is named, are not clearly known. Sunday and Monday are the days, of course, of the sun and moon. Another deity of our forefathers is perpetuated in Easter, the day of *Eostre*, the deity of the dawn. Our ancestors believed in a future abode called the Walhalla, where the brave warrior, after death, would sit at the feast, quaffing from the skulls of his slaughtered enemies.

Of the conquest of Britain by the Angles and the other members of the confederacy, little can be asserted as proven, for our chief authority, the "Anglo-Saxon Chronicle," was not written until more than two hundred years later. The familiar story is that in the year 449, the chiefs of Britain were holding a council as to the most efficient means of repelling the invasion of the Picts and Scots, when intelligence was brought of the landing of a body of Jutish pirates under Hengist and Horsa, on the neighbouring coasts. Vortigern, one of the most powerful princes, proposed that the strangers should be invited to assist them against the common enemy, which proposal was adopted. In consequence of this arrangement, a negotiation with the strangers was entered into;

the Jutes were promised money and supplies in exchange for their swords and arms. The offers were acceded to, and the Picts and Scots driven back to their own country. Although the Jutes were far from being numerous, Vortigern became anxious to secure their services for the future, and a treaty was accordingly concluded between him and the two brothers, Hengist and Horsa, by which the latter bound themselves to return with a much larger number of their countrymen, on condition of receiving a tract of land and subsidies of various kinds. The island of Thanet was devoted to them for their abode. Faithful to their promise, the allies returned with considerable reinforcements, and landed on the coast of Kent. For some time the Jutes remained faithful to their engagement; but becoming tired of fighting for others, their pride increased with their success, and they demanded a large increase of territory, which was indignantly refused. That which they could not obtain by concession they resolved to gain by conquest, to which end they treacherously entered into an alliance with the Picts and Scots, whom they had hitherto combated. This fatal treaty made the Britons comprehend at last the error they had fallen into. Instead of allies, they had made for themselves masters. Indignation at the treachery, however, did not permit them at once to succumb; the struggle was a fierce and protracted one. Several British chiefs immortalised themselves in the battle which was fought at Aylesford by deeds worthy of the heroic age; amongst others the son of Vortigern, who, being pressed in battle, tore up a young tree by its roots, with which he killed Horsa, and the Jutes were put to flight. It is evident that the writer of the "Chronicle" imagines that the Britons obtained several victories, for Hengist and the rest of his companions re-embarked, and for five years the island was free from their presence. The Jutes once more returned under the leadership of the surviving brother, Hengist, in formidable numbers, and soon afterwards gained the battle of Crayford, the result of which was the cession of the greater part of Kent to the conquerors in 473. Eight years later they obtained a second victory, which assured Hengist in his new possessions, from that date called the kingdom of East Kent, to which was afterwards added West Kent and the Isle of Wight.

Twenty-eight years after the first landing of the Jutes, Ælla, a chief of Saxon race, who boasted himself the descendant of Odin, arrived with his three sons in the same number of vessels, on the coast of Kent, and took the old Roman fortress of Anderida (Pevensey). He eventually founded the kingdom of Sussex.

The third kingdom founded by the invaders was that of Wessex, which in time became the mightiest of them all. This, too, was created by Saxons, who, settling to the west of the people of Sussex (South-Saxons), called themselves West-Saxons. It began by an invasion of what is now Hampshire by Cerdic and his son Cymric in 495, who, like the other victorious chiefs, soon assumed the title of king. From them are descended the royal family of the present day. They gradually conquered the country up to the Severn, and as far as the limits of what are now called Oxfordshire and Berkshire. From the Britons, or *Welsh* as they called them, "the speakers," that is, "of a strange tongue," they met a vigorous resistance, and the war was doubtless carried on with hideous ferocity. From the few Welsh words in the English language it is clear that little or no admixture of races took place. The men were exterminated or driven into the mountains; the women were probably kept as slaves. The hero of the Welsh resistance in the west was the famous Arthur, whom legend has so entirely taken for her own that very little positively can be asserted about him. It is certain, however, that he won a great battle over the Saxons at Mons Badonicus, identified by Professor Freeman with Badbury in Dorsetshire. Ceawlin, however, the grandson of Cerdic, rallied the Saxons, and after a long and protracted struggle, the resistance of the Welsh was broken for the time being in 577 by the great victory of Deorham, near Gloucester.

The third Saxon kingdom was that of Essex (the East Saxons), which included the greater part of Middlesex, and with it London. No record, however, remains to tell us of the exact process or time of this invasion.

The greater part of England and Scotland was, however, possessed by the Angles; but of these migrations we know far less than those of the Jutes and Saxons. East Anglia is said to have been founded in the fourth century by a chief named Uffa, and there were two settlements formed, Norfolk and Suffolk (the folk of the north and south).

Northumbria was also an Anglian settlement, with an admixture of Frisians, on the banks of the Forth. We know little, however, of the manner in which the two great divisions grew up—Bernicia, including the whole of the country from the Forth to the Tees, with Edinburgh as its capital;

TREATY OF HENGIST AND HORSA WITH VORTIGERN. (*See p.* 27.)

and Deira, founded by Ida in 547, answering, roughly speaking, to Yorkshire, with York as its chief town. These two kingdoms were sometimes united under one king; sometimes separate. The first king over all Northumbria was Ethelfrith (600). It is important to notice that the Lowland Scots are as purely English as the people of London; and, curiously enough, we are in ignorance of the date when the present boundary line between the two kingdoms became in any way fixed.

The separation probably did not occur before the time of Canute the Dane.

The last of the English kingdoms to be formed was that of Mercia, the march or border-land. It probably owed its origin to the gradual combination of a number of smaller kingdoms, and extended over the greater part of the midlands.

Thus was founded what is sometimes called the Heptarchy; but wrongly so: in the first place, because the word does not mean "seven kingdoms," but "the rule of seven persons;" and in the second, because the number of kingdoms in England was never fixed, but was sometimes fewer than seven, sometimes more. It will be noticed that the Britons, or Welsh, still had possession of an unbroken territory, extending over the whole of the west of England and Scotland. It included Devon, Cornwall, and the greater part of Somerset, the whole of the country west of the Severn, part of Chester, Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland, and the whole of the south-west of Scotland, which was called the kingdom of Strathclyde. The Celtic inhabitants of the Scottish Highlands were also unsubdued; and for many years the English fought against the Welsh and between themselves.

The first of the Anglo-Saxon or English kingdoms (to give them the more generally accepted title) to acquire a definite superiority was that of Kent; but it soon gave way to the rising power of Northumbria. Nevertheless, the period of Kentish ascendency is one of great importance, for it witnessed the conversion of England to Christianity. Ethelbert, who reigned from 560 to 616, was the first prominent English king after the various sovereignties had taken shape and consistency. He married a Christian princess, Bertha, the daughter of Charibert, king of the Franks. But although she was allowed to exercise her religion, it does not appear that the new faith made any sensible progress until, in the year 597, Pope Gregory the Great determined to send a monk, named Augustine, to preach the Gospel in the land of the heathen English. The beautiful story of the means by which Gregory's attention was called to this distant land is well known. Before he became Pope, it chanced one day that he was walking in the market-place at Rome and saw some fair boys exposed for sale as slaves. His curiosity aroused, he asked of what nation they came. "They are *Angles*," was the reply. "*Non Angli sed Angeli*" ("They are not Angles, but angels"), said Gregory, "and should be the co-heirs of the angels in heaven. But of what tribe are they?" "Of Deira." "Then must they be delivered *de ira Dei* (from the wrath of God). And who is their king?" "Ella," was the answer. "Then," said Gregory, "shall *Alleluia* be sung in his land."

When Gregory became Pope he was not long in making good the promise, as far as in him lay.

Augustine's task was easy; Ethelbert permitted him and his comrades to dwell at Canterbury and preach to the people. After a while he went back to the Continent to be consecrated bishop; and on his return, made the church at Canterbury the cathedral of his diocese, whence Canterbury is still the metropolitan see of all England. Although Christianity had been exterminated by the invaders, its dying embers were rekindled among the Welsh by missionaries from the Continent, and an attempt was now made to agree upon a basis of union for the two churches. For this purpose a meeting was arranged between Augustine and the Welsh bishops at a spot on the banks of the Severn, and a conference was held. But although the points of difference were slight, neither side would yield; and so the two churches remained separate.

The greatness of Kent did not endure long after the landing of Augustine, for in 616 Ethelbert, who had been over-king of the whole of England as far north as the Humber, died; and his son Eadbald proved an inferior ruler, and even relapsed into paganism. It was to the north that the balance of power now inclined, where Edwin of Deira became King of Northumbria, having overthrown his rival, Ethelfrith of Bernicia, in a great battle, on the banks of the Idle (617). His marriage with Ethelberga, the daughter of Ethelbert of Kent, led to the conversion of Northumbria to Christianity. She brought with her a priest named Paulinus, and he rapidly succeeded in persuading the people to adopt Christianity. The story of the king taking counsel with his aldermen and wise men concerning the new faith which was preached in their midst, and the fine speech made by one of the thegns, in which he compared the life of man to the flight of a sparrow from the darkness into a warm room at winter-time, and thence out into the darkness and storm again, is told us by Bede in his *Ecclesiastical History of the Nation of the English.* "So it is," said the noble, "with the life of man; it endures but for a moment, and we know not at all of what goeth before it and what cometh after it. Therefore, if these strangers can tell us anything that we may know whence a man cometh, and whither he goeth, let us hear them and follow their law."

So Northumbria became Christian for the time being, and a church was built at York with Paulinus as its bishop. But in 633 Edwin was defeated and slain at Heathfield by the King of the Welsh, and Penda the heathen king of Mercia, and the country relapsed for a time into heathendom, until Oswald, Edwin's nephew, known as St. Oswald, brought St. Aidan, a Scottish bishop, to Northumbria, and founded the see of Lindisfarne, in Holy Island, off the Northumbrian coast. There the holy St. Cuthbert lived, until his death in 687, and, going forth over all Northumbria, converted vast numbers of men and women.

Concerning the conversion of the remaining kingdoms, we know comparatively little. Mercia became Christian on the death of Penda, who was overthrown by Oswy of Northumbria, in 655, at the battle of Winwood. Wessex was converted by a bishop called Birinus, who was sent from Rome by Pope Honorius; and though the first bishopric was fixed at Dorchester, in Oxfordshire, the episcopal seat of Wessex was eventually fixed at Winchester, and Dorchester became that of the Mercians. The last part of England to become Christian was East Anglia, which was converted by Wilfrith, who had been driven from Northumberland by King Egfrith, Oswy's son and successor.

In less than a hundred years after the arrival of St. Augustine, England became Christian, and the conversion had been in many cases accomplished by missionaries from Rome. But many of the kingdoms also had been brought to the new faith by bishops from Scotland; Mercia, for instance, and Northumbria finally. These bishops came in many cases from the island of Iona, and they did not acknowledge or follow the customs of the Church of Rome. The great question as to which of the two rituals should prevail was settled at a synod held at Whitby, when Northumbria adopted the Roman use, and from that time ecclesiastical unity prevailed.

The organisation of the Church of England was effected by Theodore of Tarsus, who was sent over to England as Archbishop of Canterbury in 668. He proceeded to organise the various sees, usually following the limits of the old English kingdoms; and though changes were occasionally made, much of his work was permanent, and exists at the present day. So England was one kingdom as far as its religious constitution was concerned, and this unity led in turn, as we shall see, to a civil unity under the kings of Wessex.

By the beginning of the eighth century it had become evident that the struggle for supremacy would eventually be between Wessex and Mercia, for Northumbria, a turbulent state, harassed by succession questions, had already ceased to hold the pride of place. At first Mercia appeared to have the advantage of the struggle. It soon recovered from the overthrow of Penda, and from the years 716 to 819, with one or two intervals of temporary prostration, it was extremely powerful. Ethelbald, the nephew of Penda, reigned from 716 to 755, and built up a great power. Taking advantage of the anarchy in Northumbria, and of the abdication of Ina of Wessex, he subdued his neighbours in a series of successful wars, and claimed to be king "not only of the Mercians, but of all the people who are called by the common name of South-Angles." He was, however, in 754, confronted by a general rebellion, and utterly defeated in a battle at Burford.

In the following year Ethelbald died, and after a year's anarchy was succeeded by Offa. He was not only a great warrior, but a great statesman, and combined a series of conquests with a series of judicious marriage alliances, until he had almost succeeded in making himself king over all England. His most glorious wars were those against the Welsh, whom he drove back from the Severn to the Wye. He built a large dyke from the mouth of the Wye to the mouth of the Dee to keep them back, called Offa's dyke. Offa was reverenced on the Continent almost as much as in England, and we even find him corresponding on terms of equality with the Emperor Charles the Great, known to romance as Charlemagne. Offa was a warm friend of the Church; he created a temporary archbishopric at Lichfield as a rival to York and Canterbury, and founded the Abbey of St. Albans. The power of Mercia, however, depended almost entirely on the personal abilities of her kings, and ended with Cenwulf, who reigned from 796 to 815. After his death it speedily collapsed, partly owing to the failure of the royal line, partly owing to the rising power of Wessex, and partly also owing to devastating raids of the Danes, who had already begun to make their appearance in Britain.

CHAPTER IV.

RISE OF WESSEX AND OF THE SOCIAL SYSTEM OF ENGLAND.

Ceawlin and his Successors—Cedwalla—Ina—Subjection to Mercia—Accession of Egbert—He subdues his Rivals—His Wars with the Welsh and Danes—Land-owning System—Local Assemblies—The Hundred Moot—The Shire Moot and its Business—Methods of Trial and Punishments—The Wergild—The Witena-gemot—Its Powers—The King—Class Distinctions—The Church.

HITHERTO the rise of the kingdom of Wessex has been left out of sight in these pages; but as we are approaching the reign of the great king Egbert, it is necessary to trace the steps by which a great power had been slowly consolidated in the West under a series of able kings. We have already mentioned Ceawlin, the third of the sovereigns of the West Saxons. This prince greatly added to his authority and possessions. Besides defeating the Welsh in numerous battles, and conquering a large district north of the Thames, he seized upon the kingdom of Sussex after the death of Cissa, defeated the King of Kent, and was suspected of entertaining the ambitious project of reducing all England under his sceptre. But his subjects, headed by his nephew, Ceolric, rose against him, and met him in battle at Wodensbury. Being defeated, Ceawlin ended his days in exile. This collapse lost to the kingdom of Wessex all the country which had been annexed to the north of the Thames.

Ceolric, his nephew, succeeded him; he died in 597.

This last-named prince was followed by his brother, Ceolwulf, who defeated the South Saxons, and died in 611.

Cynegils, the son of Ceolric, succeeded him, and divided the kingdom with his brother Quicelm. The two last-named princes obtained a great victory over the Britons in 614. Before the death of Quicelm, which took place in 635, he became a Christian: after his decease the kingdom was again united under Cynegils, also a Christian, who henceforth reigned alone.

Cenwealh, his son, had to carry on a succession of wars with the kings of Mercia. Penda, whose sister he had divorced, drove him from his kingdom, and he remained in exile several years, but was afterwards restored, dying in 672. His widow, Sexburh, was chosen as his successor.

This princess reigned little more than a year, when she died. Some historians say that she was deposed by her subjects, who disliked the idea of being commanded by a woman.

Cedwalla became king in 688. During the life of his predecessor, who was jealous of the affection which the people bore him, he had been compelled to fly. He carried on severe contests with the kings of Kent. He afterwards conquered the Isle of Wight; and would have rooted out all the inhabitants, but for the remonstrances of Wilfrith, Bishop of Selsey. In 688 he undertook a journey to Rome, to receive baptism at the hands of the Pope; for although he was a Christian and a great zealot, he had never been baptised. As he travelled through France and Lombardy, he was everywhere very honourably received; and Cunibert, King of the Lombards, was particularly remarkable for the noble entertainment he gave him. When he came to Rome, he was baptised by Pope Sergius II., who gave him the name of Peter. He had always expressed a wish to die soon after his baptism, and his desire was gratified, for he died a few weeks after, at Rome, and was buried at St. Peter's Church, where a stately tomb was erected to his memory, with an epitaph showing his name, quality, age, and time of his death. His two sons being too young to succeed him, his cousin Ina mounted the throne.

Ina was a king of much ability, and reigned no less than thirty-eight years, *i.e.* from 688 to 726. He was a man of war, a legislator, and a saint. By arms he succeeded in reducing Kent, Sussex, and East Anglia to obedience, and fought many battles against the Welsh, building the fortress of Taunton to protect his new frontier. As a legislator he made a collection of laws seventy-six in number, which is the earliest English code still in existence with the exception of some fragments of a legal system drawn up by the kings of Kent. His holiness was seen in his large benefactions to the Church. Wessex was divided into two dioceses, the new bishop being placed at Sherborne, in Dorsetshire; he founded and endowed, moreover, several monasteries, and rebuilt the abbey of Glastonbury, the burial place of the famous king Arthur. But towards the end of his reign it did not fare well with Ina. In 714 he fought a great battle with the Mercians, in which so many were slain on either side that the issue was held to be doubtful, and this large loss of life perhaps was the cause of his subsequent defeats by the Welsh. Moreover, the members of the royal house proved rebellious, and their leader Aldbert was not defeated by Ina until a wearying contest had been waged between the two parties. In 726, therefore, Ina, tired of the world, and wishing to provide for the safety of his soul, resigned his kingdom, and went to Rome, where he was received by Pope Gregory the Second, and ended his days as a common man.

The abdication of Ina was not productive of good consequences to Wessex; and for nineteen years, from 733 to 752, the country was subject, as has already been mentioned, to the yoke of Mercia until, led by their king Cuthred, the second in succession to Ina, the people won freedom at the battle of Burford. This stage of the history of Wessex is not very important, and closes in 802, when the great king Egbert ascended the throne.

Egbert had laid claim to the throne on the death of Cynewulf, which took place in 784, but without success. Bertric was elected. Fear of the vengeance of his more successful rival caused him to take refuge at the court of Offa of Mercia, but still pursued by the jealousy of Bertric he eventually withdrew to the court of Charles the Great. A close friendship arose between the two, and Egbert modelled his after-career on that of his benefactor. On the death of Bertric he was elected in his absence by the Witena-gemot, or assembly of the wise men, in due form, and reigned

EDWIN OF NORTHUMBRIA AND THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES. (*See p. 29.*)

until 836. At once he set himself to win a superiority over the island, as Charles had established a dominion on the continent. In the cases of the southern kingdoms his task was easy, and they submitted without a blow; East Anglia being allowed to retain her line of sovereigns as subordinate kings, Kent, Essex and Sussex being practically annexed to Wessex. But with Mercia the task was not so easy. However, in 823 he defeated the Mercians so completely at the great battle of Ellandune that their subject kingdoms, the names and extent of which are not exactly known, were at once annexed to Wessex; and four years later Mercia itself owned his supremacy, the king becoming his subordinate. In the following year Northumbria, torn to pieces by internal dissensions, submitted on similar terms. He thus became ruler over all England, and is deservedly honoured by the "Chronicle" with the title of Bretwalda, or "Wealder of Britain," which is bestowed on some of his predecessors with far more questionable propriety.

MEETING OF THE SHIRE-MOOT. (*See p.* 34.)

Not only did Egbert set himself the task of mastering all the English; but he determined to conquer territory from the Welsh as well. During the greater part of the reign the struggle went on with varying fortunes, the general result being that Devonshire became English, that after the subjection of Mercia the whole of Wales proper submitted (828), but that he failed to make any impression upon the Celtic peoples north of the Dee. In 835, the year before he died, the West Welsh, or Cornish, rose in arms, and were reinforced by the Danes, who now began to scourge the English coasts. Egbert, however, won a victory over them at Hengestesdun. At the time of his death this great king ruled over the whole country south of the Forth, with the exception of Cornwall and the south-west of Scotland and north-west corner of England. Evidently he must have been a man of first-rate ability; but of his personal character and disposition singularly little is known.

Before coming to the period when the Danish invasions (which, however, had already begun) became a matter of annual occurrence, it may be well to see what changes had been effected in the social system of our ancestors since their migration from the banks of the Elbe.

The system of land-owning was much changed, and private property in land became the rule rather than the exception. At first land was allotted to each village, and every family had a portion, known as a *hide*, as its share. The dimensions of the hide appear to have varied according to locality; as a rule it comprised from thirty to forty acres, but in later times it covered as much as a hundred and twenty. The remainder of the land was theoretically public property, and hence was called *folkland;* but it was in the hands of the king, who, with the assent of the Witenagemot, made grants of it from time to time to his thegns, or to the great monasteries, when it was known as *bookland*, land that is granted out on copyhold tenure—to use a modern legal equivalent, which is fairly exact. *Ethel*, or *alod*, was land held by undisputed possession from the first settlement, and which could be transmitted from father to son. The owners of *Ethel* had no title-deeds to show, but based their claim to ownership on tradition. Later on, however, the distinction between *Ethel* and *bookland* disappears, the owners of the former finding it a safer course to get a charter for their property.

As to the administration of the English kingdoms, the important point to notice is that it was not entirely in the hands of a central authority, but each local community had its own affairs in its hands to a very considerable extent. In viewing the social organism, it will be well to start, as before, from the village community, whether in the form of *vicus* or rural township, *town* or group of houses surrounded by a quickset hedge or *tun*, and *borough* the dwellings round the fortified house (*burh*) of a great noble. In each of these there was a *moot*, or local assembly, presided over by a magistrate or *reeve*, who was at first elected by the general body of the inhabitants, but later on appointed by the neighbouring nobility. So, too, the judicial functions of these petty assemblies were rapidly taken from them, and cases were tried instead at the manor-courts of the great lords.

A union of villages and towns formed the *hundred*, and to the court of the hundred each township sent the reeve and four men. Cases which lay outside their jurisdiction were sent up from the town-moots, but here, too, the nobility began to encroach upon the rights of their weaker neighbours; and in cases where landowners had privileges known as *sac* and *soc*, the decision in their courts was final, and was not subject to the court of the hundred. The police of the hundred was provided by the system known as *frankpledge* (peace pledge), by which freemen were grouped into bodies of ten, in which each man had to go bail for any one of the other nine, and produce him before the court if he had done wrong. The landless man in the same way was compelled to find a lord who would be answerable for him.

The division above the hundred was the *shire*, usually formed on the lines of the old kingdoms, as in the case of Kent and Sussex; or sub-kingdoms as in the case of most of the midland shires. The boundaries of each shire were co-extensive with those of each bishopric. The court of the shire, or shire-moot, was presided over by the *sheriff* or reeve of the shire, who was appointed by the king. By his side sat the alderman or chief military officer of the shire, and the bishop. The shire-moot met twice a year, and any freeman was entitled to attend it, and to have a voice in its decisions.

Its business was two-fold, taxation and justice. Taxation was a very simple affair, being practically non-existent until the period of the Danish invasion, when, as we shall see, the obnoxious burden known as Danegeld was introduced. Its necessity was obviated by the obligation which lay upon every freeman known as the "three-fold necessity" (*trinoda necessitas*), by which he was bound to attend the host or *fyrd* in time of war, to repair the public roads, and to keep the fortifications in good order. Thus no imposts were necessary for what are some of the principal sources of modern rating; while the king lived and kept up his court upon the proceeds of the royal domains.

In the matter of justice the shire-moot acted as a court of appeal from the inferior courts. The influence of the great landowners over it must have been considerable, for the verdict was given by the twelve senior thegns. The methods of trial in this and the other courts of old England in criminal cases were three in number, a statement of innocence on oath, *compurgation* and *ordeal*. Compurgation was a mode of defence by which a man was held to have established his innocence if he could get twelve men to swear that he was not guilty of the crime in question. Ordeal was allowed as an alternative to those who failed in or shrank from the process of compurgation or of taking an oath themselves. It was practised either by boiling water or red-hot iron. The water, or iron, was consecrated by many prayers, masses, fastings, and exorcisms; after which the person accused either took up a stone sunk in the water to a certain depth, or carried the iron to a certain distance; and his hand being wrapped up, and the covering sealed for three days, if there appeared, on examining it, no marks of burning, he was pronounced innocent; if otherwise, guilty. There were other and less credible methods of trial by ordeal. The trial by cold water was one of them. The person was thrown into consecrated water; if he swam he was guilty, if he sank, innocent. It is difficult for us to conceive how any innocent person could ever escape by the one trial, or any criminal be convicted by the other. But there was another usage admirably calculated for allowing every criminal to escape who had confidence enough to try it. A consecrated cake, called a *corsned*, was produced; if the person could swallow and digest it, he was pronounced innocent. Walking on burning ploughshares also appears as an ordeal, but seldom, or never, except in stories that are evidently mythical.

The punishments amongst the English seem to have been exceedingly mild for some offences, since even murder might be atoned for by the payment of a fine.

The laws of Alfred enjoin that if any one know that his enemy or aggressor, after doing him an injury, resolves to keep within his own house and his own lands, he shall not fight him till he require compensation for the injury. If he be strong enough to besiege him in his house, he may do it for seven days without attacking him; and if the aggressor be willing during that time to surrender himself and his arms, his adversary may detain him thirty days; but is afterwards obliged to restore him safe to his kindred, and be content with the compensation. If the criminal fly to the church, that sanctuary must not be violated. Where the assailant has not force sufficient to besiege the criminal in his house, he must apply to the alderman for assistance; and if the alderman refuse aid, the assailant must have recourse to the king; and he is not allowed to assault the house till after this supreme magistrate has refused assistance. If any one meet with his enemy, and be ignorant that he was resolved to keep within his own lands, he must, before he attack him, require him to surrender himself prisoner, and deliver up his arms, in which case he may detain him thirty days; but if he refuse to deliver up his arms, it is then lawful to fight him. A slave may fight in his master's quarrel, and a father in his son's, with any one except his master.

Ina enacted that no man should take revenge till he had first demanded compensation, and it had been refused him.

King Edmund decreed that if a man committed a murder, he might, within a year, pay the fine, with the assistance of his relatives and friends; but if they refused to aid him, he should alone sustain the feud with the kindred of the murdered person.

There is, indeed, a law of Alfred, which makes wilful murder capital; but this seems only to have been an attempt of that great legislator towards establishing a better police in the kingdom, and probably it was not often carried into execution. By the laws of the same prince, a conspiracy against the life of the king might be redeemed by a fine.

The fine to be paid for the murder of a king, or his wergild—a word signifying the legal value of any one,—was by law 30,000 thrismas, nearly 1,300 pounds of present money. The price of the head of one of royal blood (Atheling), was 15,000 thrismas; that of a bishop's, or alderman's, 8,000; a sheriff's, 4,000; a thegn's, or clergyman's, 2,000; a ceorl's, 266. These prices were fixed by the laws of the Angles. By the Mercian law, the price of a ceorl's head was 200 shillings; that of a thegn's six times as much; that of a king's, six times more. By the laws of Kent, the price of the archbishop's head was higher than that of the king. It must be understood that where a person was unable or unwilling to pay the fine, he was put out of the protection of the law, and the kindred of the deceased had liberty to punish him as they thought proper.

The price of all kinds of wounds was likewise fixed by the English law: a wound of an inch long under the hair was paid with one shilling; one of a like size in the face, with two shillings; thirty shillings were the compensation for the loss of an ear; and so forth. There seems not to have been any difference made according to the dignity of the person. By the laws of Ethelbert, any one who committed adultery with his neighbour's wife was obliged to pay him a fine, and buy him another wife.

The court of the nation was known as the *witena-gemot*, or assembly of the wise men. Originally, no doubt, it was a far more popular institution than it became in later times. In theory every freeman was entitled to be present; but it was gradually confined to a small body of men, and the average number of those who attended it was about thirty. They consisted of royal officials and heads of the church, the bishops, aldermen, and personal attendants of the king spoken of in the laws and chronicles as *ministri*. Such a body, although it had in theory great powers, was, as Bishop Stubbs points out, practically very much under the control of a strong king.

Its powers were as follows :

(1) All laws, whether national or ecclesiastical, were made with its counsel and consent.

(2) It supervised grants of land, especially the conversion of *folkland* into *bookland.*

(3) It was a court of justice in the last resort.

(4) It laid on especial taxes, such as the Danegeld.

(5) It discussed questions of foreign policy.

(6) It elected the aldermen in conjunction with the king, and the bishops in the more important sees. Bishops were, as a rule, however, elected by the clergy.

(7) It could elect and depose kings. Deposition was frequent in some kingdoms, notably in turbulent Northumbria. As to election, "the choice," says Bishop Stubbs, "was limited to the best qualified person standing in close connection to the last sovereign."

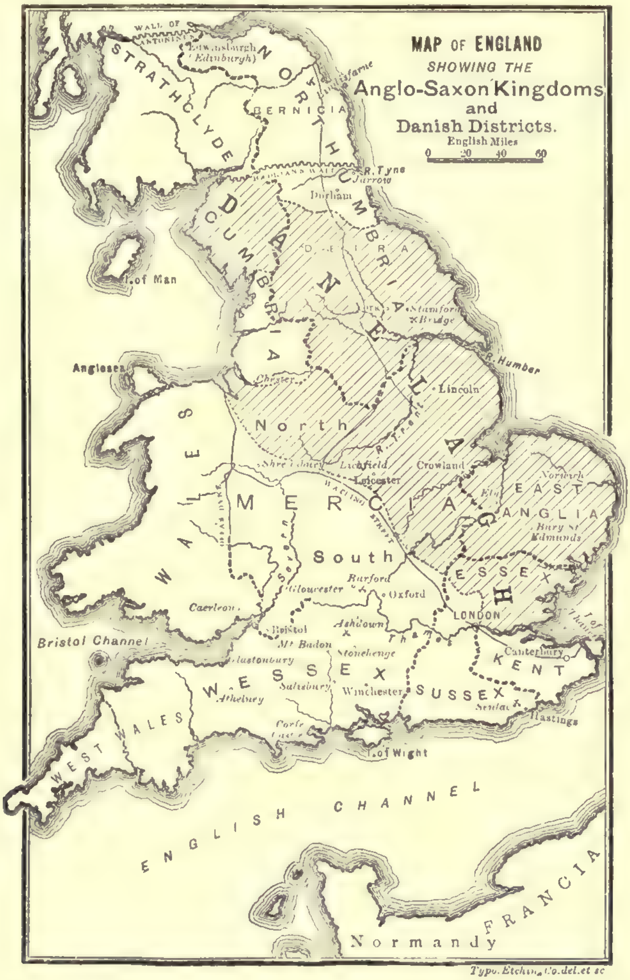
Thus we see that the English kings were elected by the assembly of the nation; and they went through some form of election, perfunctory though it was no doubt, even in times subsequent to the Norman conquest. We have already mentioned that the institution of kingship was subsequent to the invasion of Britain, and was due to the immense amount of territory that fell to the disposal of the victorious general and the accession of importance he assumed thereby. The king was the chief magistrate in peace, and the leader of the national host (*fyrd*) in war; and the introduction of Christianity invested him with new attributes of sanctity. Still, it is important to notice that the idea of treason, and the penalty of death attached to it, was of late development. The penalty for killing a king is only a higher *wergild* than in the case of an ordinary individual.

The difference between class and class becomes more sharply defined after the invasion of Britain than before it. The bodyguard of the king (*comitatus* or *gesith*) is more distinctly dependent upon him. They are known as his servants, or *thegns.* As regards the bulk of the people they form, however, a noble class. There were king's thegns and lesser thegns; the distinction being apparently regulated by the amount of land which they possessed.

It was possible, however, for men who were not owners of land, to rise to the rank of thegn. Thus Athelstan decreed that a merchant who made three long sea voyages on his own account should be entitled to the quality of thegn. The classes of *ceorls*, or freedmen, and *laets*, landless men who cultivated the soil for their lords, continued to exist; but there was also a class of absolute slaves usually occupied in household labour, whose position must have been most unenviable. The power of the master over his slave, however, was not unlimited, for if he beat his eyes or his teeth out, the latter might claim his liberty; and if he killed him, he paid a fine to the king, provided the slave died within a day after receiving his wound.

The English Church was on the best of relations with the various kingdoms with which its dioceses coincided. The bishop sat with the sheriff and alderman in the shire-moot, and was a member of the witena-gemot. The kings and aldermen in the same way took part in the ecclesiastical councils which were convened after the organisation of the ecclesiastical system by Theodore of Tarsus. According to his scheme of reform, a general council of the whole Church was to assemble every August, and he himself presided over two great councils at Hertford and Hatfield. The idea was not carried out after his death with perfect regularity, especially after Archbishop Egbert had successfully asserted the independence of the see of York; still such assemblies were occasionally held, and were of the greatest assistance in developing the idea of national unity. They met at some border town such as Clovesho, an unknown spot near London, where the hostile kings of Mercia, Wessex, Kent, and Essex associating with the bishops, abbots, and occasionally diocesan clergy, learnt to sink their differences, and to realise the greatness of their common interests. Even after the national assemblies had practically resolved themselves into the two provincial synods of Canterbury and York, the comparative unimportance of the northern province frequently invested the proceedings of the southern with a national character. Assemblies of each diocese were also occasionally summoned, which were largely attended by the parish priests, the parish coinciding with the townships in the same way that the diocese coincided with the kingdom or sub-kingdom.

The English Church was notably a learned Church, and numbered among its dignitaries Bede, the historian of the Church. Despite the intimate connection between Church and State, it was not a distinctly political Church. The sees were often set up at a distance from the great towns; and the bishops made their ecclesiastical duties the chief interest of their lives, seldom degenerating, as on the Continent, into great territorial princes. The Church was also a popular institution. It was supported by voluntary tithes which were not made imperative by law earlier than the year 787. Its main fault was a certain desultoriness of effort, which is to be traced in the failure to carry out Theodore's plans in their integrity. Learning had almost died out at the time of the accession of Alfred, and the invasions of the Danes can only be adduced as a partial excuse. We find that king complaining that very few of his clergy could translate a letter from Latin. The Church was, moreover, excessively monastic. Pious kings founded and liberally endowed numerous monasteries, which rapidly became luxurious and corrupt, until some were religious societies only in name. The system, however, had its advantages when it was necessary to furnish missionaries gratuitously to poor districts.



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MAP OF ENGLAND SHOWING THE ANGLO-SAXON KINGDOMS AND DANISH DISTRICTS.

CHAPTER V.

THE DANISH INVASIONS AND THE REIGN OF ALFRED.

Character of the Invaders—Reign of Ethelwulf—Reigns of Ethelbald and Ethelbert—The Conquest of East Anglia—Battles near Reading—The Accession of Alfred—The Extinction of the Kingdom of Mercia—The Invasion of Wessex—The Year 878 Alfred at Athelney—Death of Hubba—Victory of Alfred and the Treaty of Wedmore—Renewal of the War—Alfred's fleet—Expeditions of Hastings—Remainder of the Reign—Character of Alfred—His Rules of Life—His Legislation—Encouragement of Learning.

WE have arrived at the period of the Danish invasions, which has been divided by Professor Freeman into three parts :

(1) When the Danes came to plunder.
(2) When they came to settle.
(3) When they came to conquer England.

Of the first division little is to be said, and in part it has already been dealt with incidentally while tracing the rise of the kingdom of Wessex. The first descent upon the English coast seems to have been made upon Northumbria in 787.

The Danes were a brave and unscrupulous race, inhabiting not only Denmark, but also Norway. Bound by a limited territory, in a climate where population rapidly increases, it is not to be wondered at that Denmark and Norway were overstocked with inhabitants, and, consequently, forced to send away large colonies. Their natural inclination to a sea life made these exiles readily abandon their country; and the great booty the first adventurers gained tempted the richest and most powerful of their countrymen to urge their fortune in the same manner; to which end they entered into associations, and fitted out large fleets to seek and ravage foreign countries. These associations were much of the same nature with those formed in later times by the corsairs of Barbary; and they became so entirely devoted to this mode of life, that very considerable fleets were put to sea. They had the authority and example of their highest leaders, who occasionally commanded them in person, for what they did. These leaders were known by the name of Sea-kings. Their fleets made much devastation in several parts of Europe, particularly France, England, and the Low Countries. In France they were called Normans—that is, men of the north; but in England they were generally styled Danes. There is no doubt that the Swedes very often joined with the Danes in their piratical expeditions; and it appears that the Frieslanders also were concerned with them in ravaging the coasts of France and England.

Egbert died in 839, after having reigned thirty-seven years, during the last ten as sole monarch of England. He was succeeded by his son Ethelwulf, in whose reign the ravages of the Danes became yet more frequent. In a great battle fought at Charmouth the English were once more defeated by their fierce enemy, who retired to their own country again with the spoils they had collected, without attempting any settlement.

The Danes now seldom failed to visit England yearly for the sake of plunder. In 845, the Aldermen Enulph and Osric, aided by Bishop Alstan, obtained a considerable victory over them. In 851, the barbarians landed again on the coast of Wessex, where they plundered the country, but were met by Ethelwulf's general, the Alderman Ceorl, who defeated them at Wembury with great slaughter. Shortly afterwards, Athelstan, the King of Kent, encountered them upon their own element, and succeeded in capturing nine of their ships. Next year the Danes sailed up the Thames with 300 vessels, and pillaged London, after which they marched into Mercia, and would have overrun all England if the preparations of Ethelwulf had not deterred them. They re-passed the Thames, and were defeated at Okely, in Surrey. The year 855 is an important one, for the Danes then wintered in England for the first time, selecting the Isle of Sheppey for their camp.

Ethelwulf appears to have been in some respects a weak, but by no means a cruel prince. He was very religiously minded, and was led for years, in all religious matters, by Swithin, Bishop of Winchester, and Alstan, Bishop of London. By the advice of the former, he is said to have granted to the Church the tithe of all his dominions. He also sent his youngest son, Alfred, when a mere boy, to Rome, and in 855 visited the Eternal City himself. On his return, he passed through France, where he married Judith, or Leatheta, as she is named in the Saxon Chronicles, the daughter of Charles the Bald, a princess only twelve years of age. During his absence, his son Ethelbald and Bishop Alstan plotted against him, and on his arrival in England he was compelled to resign the kingdom of Wessex to the former to prevent a civil war. The aged monarch survived this partition but two years.

Ethelwulf, by his will, disposed of the kingdom of Kent to his second son, Ethelbert, and the kingdom of Wessex to Ethelbald, Ethelred, and Alfred, in order of seniority, and directed his heirs to maintain one poor person for every tithing in his hereditary lands. He died in 857, having reigned eighteen years, leaving behind him four sons and one daughter, who was married to Burhred, King of Mercia, and died at Pavia in 888. Ethelbald, the eldest son, was already in possession of the kingdom of Wessex; and Ethelbert, his brother, succeeded to Kent, Essex, Surrey, and Sussex, comprised under the name of the kingdom of Kent.

Ethelbald, a prince of but little capacity, reigned not quite three years after his father's death, his brother Ethelbert succeeding him. In the reign of the last-named king, the Danes once more renewed their ravages in England, and penetrated as far as Winchester, from which city they were beaten back to their ships at Southampton by the Aldermen Osric and Ethelwulf.

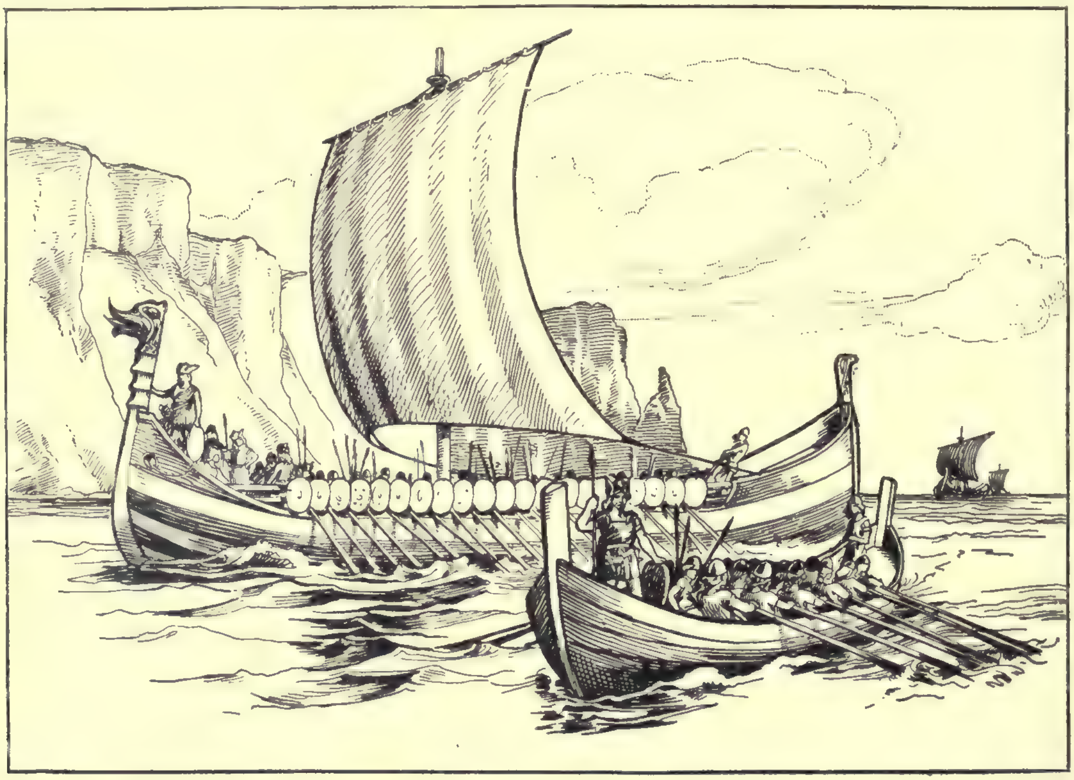
On their landing, in the autumn of the same year, in the Isle of Thanet, Ethelbert offered them a large sum of money to retire, which they promised to do, but broke faith with him, and commenced ravaging the kingdom of Kent, and carried off their booty in safety. In 866 Ethelbert died, and was succeeded by his brother, Ethelred I.

In this reign the Danish invasions assume a more terrible aspect; and the second period, the transition to which was marked by the wintering in Sheppey, may be considered to have fully begun. During his short reign, Ethelred, who was a brave warrior, was engaged in almost incessant conflict with these savage heathens. The struggle began in 867, when the brothers Ingvar and Hubba, thirsting, according to a not very probable legend, to avenge their father, who had been put to death by Ella, the sub-king of Northumbria, landed in East Anglia, and took York. In the following year they marched upon Mercia. Nottingham fell; but Ethelred and his brother Alfred came to the assistance of the Mercian king, Burhred, and drove the enemy back into Northumberland. This success was, however, only temporary, for, advancing from York in 870, under a leader named Guthrum, they conquered East Anglia, and it became a Danish kingdom. The under-king of East Anglia was named Edmund; he was defeated near Thetford, and taken prisoner. For his refusal to abjure Christianity, the barbarians shot at him with arrows while he was bound to a tree, and at last beheaded him; wherefore Edmund was deservedly honoured as a saint. Over the whole of East Anglia and Mercia hardly a church or monastery was left standing. All were committed to the flames.

With East Anglia as a basis of operations, the Danes extended their advance over parts of England which had as yet escaped. In 871 they penetrated into Wessex; but here their task was not so easy. Nine great battles were fought round Reading; some of them being won by the English, some by the Danes. Of these, the most famous was that of Ashdown, in which Alfred bore the brunt of the fray, while his brother was praying for success. At Easter, King Ethelred died, probably from the effects of a wound. His valour and piety gained for him the title of saint.

The general outlook, when Alfred was chosen king of the English in succession to his brother, must have been terrible indeed. The Danes, already masters of Northumbria, East Anglia, and Mercia, were in the very heart of the kingdom of Wessex; and, notwithstanding the many battles Ethelred had fought with them, they were in possession of several towns; and not only maintained their position in the island, but had reason to hope they should soon complete the conquest of it. The new monarch had only been a month on the throne, when he found himself obliged to take the field against these formidable enemies, who had advanced as far as Wilton, whither he marched to attack them. Victory for some time inclined to his side, then suddenly changed in favour of the Danes; but Alfred's loss was not so considerable as to make him despair, though the victory certainly belonged to the enemy. He laboured incessantly to put his army in condition to give them battle again, before they should be reinforced; they were astonished at his expedition, and, though victorious, sued for peace, finding themselves unable to continue the war. As they offered to march out of his dominions, on condition he would not molest them in any other part of England, Alfred accepted their offer, and gained by this treaty time to prepare against a new invasion.

The Danes, quitting Wessex, retired to London, which they had taken during the late war. Ingvar was gone back to Denmark, having left the command of the army to his brother Hubba, who, being prevented from attacking Wessex, turned his arms against Mercia. Burhred, its king, knowing he was unable to resist, since Alfred was bound not to send him any succours, thought it his wisest course to buy off the Danes with a sum of money, and save his country from their depredations. Upon the receipt of the money, they marched towards Northumbria, designing to take up their quarters with their countrymen; but their provisions running short, in consequence of the devastations they themselves had made there, they were under the necessity of returning into Mercia. Before they had left Northumbria, they deposed Egbert, whom they had placed on the throne, and put Recsige, a Danish earl, in his room. Burhred, finding they were come again into his dominions, complained of their breach of faith; but without regarding his complaints, they obliged him to give them another considerable sum to save his country from the destruction it was threatened with; and no sooner was the money paid, than they fell to plundering and ravaging, and Burhred found that even his own person was in danger. The fear of falling into their hands obliged him to abandon his kingdom, and retire to Rome, where he spent the rest of his days in the English college. Mercia being thus left without a king, and Alfred being prevented by his own treaty from lending any assistance, the Danes without difficulty became masters of that kingdom, and raised Ceolwulf, a servant of Burhred, to the throne, till they could otherwise dispose of it. Aware of the slight tenure of his office, the new ruler resolved to make the utmost of his time, and so oppressed the unhappy Mercians that they suffered more from the tyranny of their own countryman than from the rapacity of the conquerors. Meanwhile the Danes were beginning to settle in Northumbria, and Alfred was employing himself in winning victories over them by sea.



DANISH SHIPS.

Whilst Alfred flattered himself with the hope of enjoying comparative peace, new calamities were preparing for his unhappy country. A large party of Danes, under Guthrum, landed in England, and surprised Wareham Castle, the strongest fortress in Wessex. The king was obliged to purchase his retreat. The invaders swore on the holy relics never again to set foot in Wessex, an oath which they quickly violated. From the very nature of their government, no treaty could bind the Danes as a nation, seeing that it was composed of a variety of chiefs and petty powers, who entered

THE DANES SAILING UP THE ENGLISH CHANNEL (CIRCA 877).

FROM THE PAINTING BY HERBERT A. BONE.

into associations independent of each other. The successful return of one expedition merely proved an incentive to others of their countrymen to follow in their track.

Alfred, finding it was in vain to conclude treaties with such a perfidious race of people, resolved to take more effectual measures to secure himself from their treachery. For this purpose he convened a general assembly. He represented to them that they had nothing to trust to but their own valour and courage, to deliver them from their miseries, and urged upon them the absolute necessity of venturing their lives in defence of their country, and of sacrificing part of their estates to preserve the remainder. His eloquent remonstrances having produced the effect he expected, a force was levied, with which he went after the enemy, who had taken Exeter. Finding that they could not be dislodged from the castle, he was once more constrained to treat with the invaders; and though he could place no great dependence upon their promises, it was the only way by which he could put an end to a disastrous war. The new treaty, in which the Danes undertook not to return any

ALFRED IN THE NEAT-HERD'S HUT. (*See p.* 42.)

more into Wessex, was somewhat better kept than the former one.

The respite, however, was an exceedingly brief one, and in the year 878 Alfred's fortunes were at their lowest ebb. In the beginning of the year the Danes fitted out an expedition with great secrecy, the object of which was to overwhelm Wessex. The attack took place so suddenly that Alfred was ill prepared to meet it. Chippenham was taken, and the dispirited English no longer felt courage to prosecute the war. Many fled, whilst others (and of them not a few) leagued themselves with the Danes, swearing allegiance to them.

So general was the defection, that the unhappy monarch found himself deserted by all but a few domestics and faithful friends, who still adhered to his fallen fortunes. In this extremity, he showed himself greater, perhaps, than when on the throne, and acted with a prudence and wisdom which few princes would have found courage to imitate. He dismissed them all; and, with no other support than his courage and patriotism, set forth a wanderer, alone, and on foot, in the kingdom he had so lately reigned over.

Such was his poverty that the uncrowned king was compelled to solicit shelter in the hut of a neat-herd in the island of Athelney, in Somersetshire, a remote spot, surrounded by a dangerous marsh, wild and desolate as his own fortunes, and only to be approached by a single path, and that but little known. Here the fugitive had time to repair his shattered health, collect his thoughts, and meditate on plans for the future delivery of his oppressed and outraged country. Savage and uninviting as was his retreat, it afforded that which he had most need of, safety.

It is recorded that, whilst Alfred was an inmate of this abode, the neat-herd's wife, who did not know him, having occasion to quit the cottage for a time, set him the task of watching the cakes of rye-bread which were baking on the fire. The king, whose mind was distracted by far more important subjects, neglected his instructions, and when the woman returned she found the cakes blackened and burnt. If tradition speaks truly, the virago chid him soundly, reproaching him that he was more ready to eat than to work.

In this miserable concealment the fugitive remained six months, when fortune, tired of persecuting him, appeared to relent, and once more smiled upon the efforts of the brave, but hitherto unlucky, English.

Hubba, who had been entrusted by his brother Ingvar with the command of his troops, had invaded Wales, laying the country in flames, ravaging, and destroying. He afterwards penetrated into Devonshire, in the kingdom of Wessex, with a similar intent. At his approach the Alderman of Devon retreated with a body of determined men to Kenworth Castle, on the river Taw, in order to withstand them. The Danish chief not long before had decided on attacking the fortress, believing that the scanty garrison would surrender at his first summons; in which opinion, however, he was doomed to find himself mistaken, for the earl, seeing that it was impossible to defend the place with so few men, however devoted, told them frankly that one only course was left for them, to conquer and live free men, or die beneath the swords of their relentless enemy. His harangue had the desired effect: the English, animated by his words, sallied forth, and fell upon the Danes so unexpectedly, that before they could recover from their panic their leader was slain; on seeing which, his followers fled in all directions. The spot where Hubba fell was afterwards called Hubblestain, or Hubblelaw, from the monument raised over his remains by his countrymen.

On hearing the joyful intelligence of this victory, Alfred left his concealment, and called his friends once more to arms. They assembled in separate bodies in various parts of the kingdom, establishing such means of communication as might enable them to join their forces together at the shortest notice; and here a somewhat mythical story is told. It is said that the great difficulty was to ascertain the position of the enemy, which dangerous task the patriot king undertook himself. The story runs that, disguised as a harper, he made his way into the Danish camp, and stayed there several days, secretly noting the disposition of their forces all the while. Having acquainted himself with all he wished to learn, Alfred returned to his countrymen, and named Selwood Forest for the general place of meeting. His directions were carried out so expeditiously, that in a comparatively brief space of time the English monarch was enabled to attack his enemy at the head of a powerful army, consisting of the inhabitants of Somersetshire, Wiltshire, and Hampshire. The Danes, though unexpectedly assailed, defended themselves with their usual bravery, but at last were entirely routed. They attributed their defeat to the loss of the raven standard, which had been taken when Hubba fell, and to which they superstitiously attached magical powers—that it indicated victory and defeat by clapping or depressing its wings.

This battle was fought at Edington, not far from Trowbridge, in 878.

The consequence of this victory for the English was the Treaty of Wedmore. By it England was divided between Alfred and Guthrum, the Danish king of East Anglia, the latter receiving by far the larger part of England, but the former keeping London. The boundary line ran along the Thames to the mouth of the Lea, thence to Bedford and the Ouse to Watling Street. Thus Alfred retained Wessex and the south-west of Mercia, where he established an alderman, called Ethelred, who married his daughter, Ethelflæd, shortly to become famous as the "Lady of the Mercians." Guthrum at this time became a convert to Christianity, and was baptised under the name of Athelstan. It was not a glorious peace; but the terms were as good as could be expected, and England was at peace for several years.

The war was renewed in 893. Shortly before this a body of Danes, headed by Hastings, earnestly solicited Guthrum to renew the war in Wessex, but not prevailing, they put to sea, and ravaged the coast of Flanders; and shortly after, another, and no less numerous troop, informed of the great booty the first expedition had met with in Kent, embarked to join them. These two bands, thus united, overran Brabant, Hainault, Flanders, Picardy, and Artois, perpetrating unheard-of cruelties; after which, having again divided into two bodies, one of them sailed back to England, in hopes of plundering the country, where they imagined they should come unexpected. Having landed in Kent, they marched towards Rochester, intending to surprise that city; but Alfred, who, contrary to their expectation, had his army in readiness, hastened to meet them upon the first notice of their arrival, and his approach was sufficient to make them fly to their ships with such precipitation that they left their plunder behind them. His vigilance having prevented their designs upon England, they returned to France, and, rejoining their companions, continued their devastations in that kingdom.

Hitherto the English had acted only on the defensive. Exposed to the continual invasions of the Danes, and uncertain where the enemy would land, they were generally surprised before it was in their power to defend themselves; and the sea-coast being uninhabited, there was nothing to prevent the piratical marauders from landing unopposed. Alfred's first care, therefore, was to equip a considerable fleet, the advantage of which he had already experienced, with which he determined to cruise along the coasts, and attack all Danish ships laden with booty. Sixteen were surprised in the port of Harwich, in East Anglia, part of which were captured and the remainder sunk, and a considerable booty was also obtained.

In 894, the fighting over the south of England was renewed. The Danes, who, under the conduct of their chief, the celebrated Hastings, had ravaged France and the Low Countries, where they acquired immense booty, decided on returning to England, not with the intention of settling there, but led by the thirst of plunder. Dividing their forces into equal parts, they set sail for the island. The first expedition reached the coast of Kent, where they landed, and committed dreadful depredations. The second, under the command of Hastings, entered the Thames, and landed at Middleton, making their way to the Severn, where they were defeated by Alfred's aldermen.

Alfred, who appears to have been in East Anglia at the time of this new invasion, no sooner received the intelligence than he drew together what troops he could; and, after receiving the oaths of the Anglian Danes, marched against the new comers, and defeated another body of the enemy who were laying siege to Exeter. We have no very distinct accounts of the wars which ensued. The Danes, under the command of Hastings, returned to France, perhaps on account of the plague which, about this time, was committing great ravages in the island. The terror which the name of this chief inspired had armed all the sea-coasts of France against him; on discovering which, he resolved to change his course, and steer for the Mediterranean, where he contrived, by an act of sacrilege and deceit, to become master of the town of Luna, on the coast of Tuscany. He pretended that he had merely visited the place in order to gratify his desire of becoming a Christian, and actually received baptism from the bishop. Some little time after he caused the simple prelate to be informed that he was dead, and had left a large sum of money, on condition of his being buried in the church of Luna. By this stratagem Hastings and a considerable number of his followers obtained entrance into the town, under pretence of conducting the funeral, and immediately began to massacre and pillage the inhabitants. The adventurer ultimately settled in the city of Chartres, which Charles the Simple, King of France, assigned to him as the price of peace.

The last battles between Alfred and the Danes occurred in 897, and took place chiefly by sea, but of their details we know very little. On one occasion the Danes having penetrated up the river Lea, Alfred diverted it, and so their ships were stranded. In this year he built a number of large ships, which were a great improvement on his old navy, both in size and swiftness, and they doubtless turned the scale in his favour, for the short remainder of his reign was spent in peace. He was only fifty-two when he died, in 901, but he had lived a life of almost perpetual strife, except during the two brief periods of repose after the peace of Wedmore, and just before his death.

Alfred is one of the most perfect characters in history; not that the information concerning him is very precise, but that the stories all point in the same direction, and embody for us the attributes of a brave, upright, and pious man. He has been accused, but probably unjustly, of not having sufficient insight into the future, and he was, to a certain extent, devoid of originality. A characteristic story told of him is that while he lay concealed in the Isle of Athelney, he made a vow to dedicate to God the third part of his time, as soon as he should be restored to a state of tranquillity. He performed his promise, and allotted eight hours every day to acts of devotion, eight hours to public affairs, and as many to sleep, study, and necessary refreshment. As the use of clocks and hour-glasses was not yet introduced into England, he measured the time by means of wax-candles, marked with circular lines of different colours, which served as so many hour-lines; and to prevent the wind from making them burn unsteadily, it is said he invented the expedient of enclosing them in lanterns.

He also divided his revenues in two parts, one of which was wholly assigned for charitable uses, and subdivided into four portions: the first for alms to the poor; the second for the maintenance of the monasteries he had founded; the third for the subsistence of the teachers and scholars at Oxford; the fourth for poor monks, foreigners as well as English. The other half was divided into three parts: one was expended on his family; another in paying his architects, and other skilled workmen; and the rest was bestowed in pensions upon strangers invited to his court for the encouragement and instruction of his subjects.

As a legislator, Alfred by no means accomplished all that has been attributed to him; indeed, when the facts of his life are considered, the marvel is that he effected as much as he did towards the improvement of the moral condition of his subjects. The statements that he divided England into counties, or that he instituted trial by jury, have long ago been proved to be baseless. What he actually did was to collect and codify the laws of that part of England which was under his sway—Kent, Mercia, and Wessex—preserving on the whole the customs established by previous legislators, like Ethelbert, Offa, and Ina. "I kept," he says, "those that seemed to me good, and rejected those that were not good." Throughout these laws may easily be observed an ardent zeal for justice, and a sincere desire of rooting out oppression and violence. They were indeed mild, if compared with those of later ages, seeing they punished most offences by fines; but the strictness wherewith Alfred caused them to be observed counterbalanced their lenity. If with respect to private persons the rigour of the law was somewhat abated, it was not so with regard to unjust magistrates, for to such Alfred was ever inexorable; and history informs us that he executed four-and-forty judges within the space of one year for corruption.

Alfred was, moreover, himself a scholar, and a lover of learned men. As a scholar, he translated several books from Latin into English, for the benefit of his subjects. As Professor Freeman observes, his choice was limited by the fact that heathen authors were held in great dislike, and he, therefore, did not attempt to acquaint the English people with the beauties of Horace or Virgil. He translated, however, the *History* of Orosius, the *Ecclesiastical History* of Bede, the monk of Jarrow, which is our main authority for the century and a half that followed the conversion of England to Christianity, some of the works of Gregory the Great and Boethius' *Consolations of Philosophy*. This last was a work written by a Roman while under sentence of death, but there is nothing in the work to show that he was a Christian, although every one believed that he was one at the time when Alfred wrote. It is also supposed that the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle was put into its present shape in Alfred's time, in which case we owe him a great debt of gratitude. To regenerate religion and letters, he drew learned men from other lands, by whose aid the services of the Church were reanimated, schools were founded, and English prose, which Alfred, it should be observed, was the first to write, encouraged. Such men were Asser, who came from Wales, and who afterwards wrote Alfred's life, Grimbald, and John the Old-Saxon, who crossed over from the Continent; while nearer home, in Mercia, he discovered Werfrith and Plegmund who became Archbishop of Canterbury.

THE "LADY OF THE MERCIANS" FIGHTING THE WELSH. (*See p.* 46.)

CHAPTER VI.

EDWARD THE ELDER AND DUNSTAN.

Settlement of the Danes—Edward the Elder and his Cousin—Reconquest of the Danelagh—Edward becomes King of all England—Conspiracy of Alfred against Athelstan—Wars in Northumbria—The Death of Edwin—The Battle of Brunanburgh—The Power of Athelstan—Edwin's Wars with the Danes—Their Submission to Edmund—Rebellion and Reconquest—The Conquest of Cumberland—Death of Edmund—Final Conquest of Northumberland—The Rise of Dunstan—His Banishment—Edgar's Rebellion—His Accession to the Throne—Wars with the Welsh—Dunstan Archbishop of Canterbury—His Ecclesiastical Policy—The Reign of Edward the Martyr—Dunstan's Struggles with the Opposition—Death of the King.

By this time the settlement of the Danes in England was complete, and exhausting though the process had been by which it was accomplished, in the end it strengthened the nation through the infusion of a new and more vigorous element. Practically speaking, they occupied, as we have seen, the whole of the district north of the Thames, but in some parts the new colonists must have been exceedingly few in numbers. The Danish population lay thickest round what were called the "five Danish boroughs," *i.e.* Lincoln, Derby, Leicester, Stamford, and Nottingham. After the first storm of their fury was spent, the Danes mixed readily with the English population, and became converts to Christianity. The fusion was easy, because the language and customs of the two races were very similar. The title, *Earl*, which at this period is introduced into our language, is of Danish origin; so are the local divisions of Yorkshire, known as *Ridings* and *Wapentakes;* so also the names of towns ending in "by" and "holm."

Both parties were weary of war—of mutually destroying each other—and a brief repose was welcome. To the new settlers the retreat of their piratical countrymen was as acceptable as to the English; for the hordes who invaded the island with no other object than obtaining plunder cared very little whose possessions they ravaged; and the consequence was that the Danes suffered at times as much as the earlier possessors of the soil.

Alfred was succeeded by his son, Edward the Elder, who had not long obtained possession of the crown before a civil war broke out, which ultimately strengthened the English as a nation. Alfred's elder brother, Ethelred, left two sons, the eldest of whom, Ethelwald, having arrived at man's estate, claimed the throne, on the plea that his grandfather, Ethelwulf, had no right to make a will leaving the succession to his three sons, according to their seniority, to the exclusion of their issue—a claim which in these days would undoubtedly be looked upon as valid, but was worthless when the monarchy was elective. A numerous party supported his pretensions, and Edward was compelled to draw the sword to maintain himself in his inheritance.

Defeated in his first attempt, the pretender fled to the Danes, who received him hospitably, and, seeing the use which such an instrument might be made of in their hands, at once proclaimed him King of Northumbria.

In this crisis Edward proved himself worthy of his illustrious father, and acted with a promptitude and decision which ultimately secured to him his crown. Immediately after the battle of Wimborne, in which he had defeated his rival, he marched against him and his new allies, his army increasing daily. The Danes, unable to resist the overwhelming forces led against them, dismissed the pretender from amongst them, and ceded several strongholds as the price of peace.

In 910 the war between the two races broke out once more, and lasted, with brief intermission, for ten years; when the Danes, finding they were losing ground, sued for peace. Those who inhabited Mercia were the first to submit; the East Anglians followed their example, and the Northumbrians were the last.

Edward was materially assisted in these struggles by his warlike sister Ethelflæd, the widow of the Alderman of Mercia, who, despite her sex, appears to have delighted in arms. Aided by her brother's troops, she attacked the Welsh, who had sided with the Danes, and obliged them to pay tribute to her. Nothing, indeed, is more remarkable in the history of this time than the ease and rapidity with which Edward and his sister reconquered the Danelagh, as the district inhabited by the Danes was called. The reason of this prompt submission was that the two warriors, as we may fairly call them, were not content with merely winning battles, but took care to fortify and garrison the towns that fell into their hands. At the time of her death, in 918, the Lady of the Mercians had reconquered the country as far north as York, and was actually treating for the surrender of that city. She had, moreover, built a strong fortress at Chester, which held down the turbulent Welsh. On her death, however, Edward took the administration of Mercia into his own hands, instead of leaving it to be governed by a separate alderman. This is an important step in the consolidation of the kingdom.

There was something like a general rising in 921, but it was easily suppressed, and soon the various states of England and Scotland submitted in succession. The kings of the Welsh submitted in 922; they were followed by the king of the Scots, by Northumbria and Strathclyde. So Edward became lord of all England. The Danish invasion had indirectly helped towards this end, for by it several of the lines of under-kings had been exterminated. The kings of England from this time forward regarded themselves as emperors, and showed their independence of the Emperor of Germany by assuming the titles of *Imperator* and *Basileus*. Edward did not do so as far as we know, probably because he had no time, for in the year which followed his great success he died (925).

Edward was a great man; in statecraft and war certainly his father's equal. He was held in high regard on the Continent; five of his daughters married foreign princes, of whom Otho afterwards became Emperor of Germany. But in learning and in purity of life he compares indifferently with Alfred, and it has been thought that Athelstan, who succeeded him, was illegitimate.

Concerning Athelstan's mother, the chronicler, William of Malmesbury, relates that she was the daughter of a shepherd, and, whilst watching her father's flock, fell asleep in the fields, and had an extraordinary dream. She dreamt that a globe of light, resembling the moon, shone out from her body, and that all England was illuminated by it. This she related to Edward's nurse, who was so struck by it that she adopted her, gave her a good education, and purposely threw her in the way of the king, by whom she had three children.

On the death of Edward, the Mercians and West Saxons chose Athelstan for king, to the secret discontent of many of the nobility and clergy. Concerning this conspiracy, which was headed by a member of the royal house, named Alfred, William of Malmesbury tells a story which, even though we find it repeated several times in old English history, can hardly be accepted as genuine.

Alfred, he says, had even taken private measures to seize Athelstan at Winchester, and put out his eyes. The plot being discovered, he was apprehended by the king's order, but would confess nothing; he obstinately persisted in protesting his innocence, and offered to purge himself by oath in the presence of the Pope, an ordeal looked upon in that age as infallible in discovering the truth, since he who was rash or wicked enough to forswear himself was certain, according to the superstition of the time, to meet with a signal punishment. Athelstan agreed to this, and sent him to Rome, to take the oath before Pope John. Shortly after the arrival of the accused in Rome, word was sent that Alfred, having sworn to his innocence before the Pope, suddenly fell into a fainting fit, which, lasting three days, ended with his life; and that the Pope, convinced by his death that he had committed perjury, had ordered his body to remain in the English college till the king's pleasure should be known; upon which Athelstan, pleased with being thus rid of his enemy, consented he should have Christian burial. His lands were, however, confiscated, and given to Malmesbury monastery, and the king had inserted in the grant an account of the whole conspiracy, "to testify to the world that he dedicated to God what was His own."

The death of Edward, and the troubles which succeeded, affording the Danes, as they imagined, a favourable opportunity to revolt, they had begun to take such measures as obliged Athelstan to march into their country; but as they had not yet drawn their forces together, they were so surprised by the arrival of the king on their frontiers, that, without endeavouring to defend themselves, they returned to their allegiance; and Sithric of Northumberland sued for peace upon whatever terms the king might be pleased to impose. Athelstan being desirous to live in peace with the Danes, in order that he might have time to establish himself on the throne, not only pardoned his revolt, but gave him his sister Edith in marriage, on condition that he would receive baptism.

The dissensions in the north being appeased, he returned to Wessex, where he soon afterwards heard of the death of Sithric, who left two sons, Anlaff and Godfrid, by a former marriage. Athelstan, instead of disbanding his army, instantly retraced his march, and the two princes avoided falling into his hands only by a hasty flight, which gave him an opportunity of making himself master of all Northumbria, except the castle of York, which alone held out against him.

Although he had taken the precaution of placing garrisons in most of the cities, the conqueror was far from feeling himself secure in his new possessions. The sons of Sithric were still at liberty, as well as Reginald, another Danish prince, who had fled with them. It was not known what had become of the latter. Anlaff had fled to Ireland, whilst his brother, Godfrid, had found an asylum with the King of Scotland, Constantine, whom Athelstan immediately summoned to deliver him into his hands. Constantine being perfectly aware that he was not in a position to refuse anything to the victor at the head of a powerful army, promised to deliver the prince into his hands; but whilst he was preparing for his journey, Godfrid made his escape, either through the negligence or connivance of Constantine, who, however, met Athelstan, accompanied by Owen, King of Cumberland. Athelstan admitted Constantine's excuses for the Danish prince's escape, but, if English historians are to be credited, obliged both the kings to do homage for their kingdoms.

ETHELWULF'S RING.

Before Athelstan quitted the north, Godfrid made an attempt upon York, by means of the castle, where he had still some friends; but failing in the attempt, he surrendered himself to the King of England, who received him kindly, and allowed him a handsome pension; but in a few days he wearied of that way of life and escaped to sea, where he lived the life of a pirate.

For the next few years Athelstan was occupied in wars against the Welsh, whom he drove back behind the Wye, and caused to pay tribute. The western Welsh also gave him trouble; Athelstan therefore expelled those who inhabited Exeter, and extended the boundaries of his kingdom as far as the Parret.

In 933 Athelstan lost his brother Edwin, who was apparently drowned at sea. William of Malmesbury, however, relates the following story concerning his death:—

One of those fawning flatterers who are the curse of courts persuaded the king that his brother Edwin had connived at the conspiracy of Alfred. This accusation Athelstan unhappily gave ear to, and affected to believe the charge, whether he did or not. The prince was arrested by his unnatural brother, who, fearing to put him to death publicly, had him conveyed on board a vessel without sails or rudder, which he ordered to be let drift away to sea. Edwin, to avoid perishing by hunger, cast himself into the waves, and was drowned.

No sooner was the object of his terror removed for ever, than remorse seized upon the murderer, who, to quiet his conscience, founded the Abbey of Middleton, in Dorsetshire, where masses were daily offered for the repose of the victim's soul, and Athelstan did penance for seven years.

Edwin's accuser had not reason long to rejoice at the success of his malicious calumnies; for one day, as he waited at table with the king's cup, one of his feet slipping, he would have fallen, had he not, by the nimbleness of the other leg, recovered himself. Whereupon he jokingly said, "See how one brother helps another!" which silly jest cost him his life; as Athelstan, who overheard it, and considered it as a covert reproach addressed to himself, ordered him to be immediately executed; and thus, says the old chronicler, revenged his brother's death by that of his false accuser.

The whole story, however, is a mass of contradictions, and is demolished by Professor Freeman, who points out that tales about people being exposed in boats are very numerous; that the story about brother helping brother is related again in the history of Earl Godwin; and, further, that the story evidently belongs to the first years of the reign, whereas we know from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle that Edwin died in 933, and that it is improbable that Athelstan would have been doing penance at the time when he was winning his greatest victories.

For in the year 937 Athelstan was engaged in war against a formidable combination, and won immortal renown. The Danes by this time had formed settlements in Ireland as well as England, and we are told that one of their kings, named Anlaff, whom some think to be identical with Anlaff, the son of Sithric, others a different person, arrived from Ireland with many ships, and was joined by Owen of Cumberland, and Constantine, the king of the Scots. According to a late, and not very trustworthy, account of the campaign, it would appear that it was arranged so secretly that Anlaff entered the Humber with a fleet of six hundred sail, and invaded Northumbria before Athelstan had any intelligence of his landing; and with such forces, and the assistance of the Danes settled there, he easily became master of several small ill-guarded towns. But the fortified places that were well garrisoned by the English stopped his progress, and gave Athelstan time to draw his army together. He used such expedition, that he surprised the two confederate princes upon their march towards Bernicia. It had been agreed that this small kingdom, if conquered, should be apportioned to the King of Scotland; but the prompt measures of Athelstan, by surprising the invaders, totally defeated their plans.

ANLAFF ENTERING THE HUMBER. (*See p.* 48.)

This much is certain; that a great battle was fought at Brunanburgh, probably near Beverley in Yorkshire, an account of which is preserved in the famous song of the battle of Brunanburgh, in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. In this battle Athelstan's brother Edmund distinguished himself, and the slaughter was immense.

Of the enemy, five Danish kings, seven earls, and the son of the King of Scots were slain; but Anlaff and Constantine made good their escape. Various stories have gathered round this campaign, in one of which Olaf is represented as going into the English camp in the guise of a minstrel just before the battle, to discover what he could concerning the resources of the enemy, which is evidently a duplicate of the tale told concerning Alfred.

Three years afterwards Athelstan died, after a brief but glorious reign. The marriage connections between his sisters and foreign princes had caused his influence throughout western Europe to be very great; for instance, we find that it was through his influence that Louis d'Outremer, the son of Charles the Simple, was restored to the throne of the Franks. He was also a benefactor of religious foundations, particularly of the abbey of Malmesbury. Further, he was a lawgiver of considerable originality, and added a number of excellent statutes to those of his grandfather. His ordinances are particularly directed to the enforcement of the system of mutual assurance and association, which forms a distinctive feature of Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence.

Athelstan was succeeded by his brother, who had covered himself with so much renown at the battle of Brunanburgh.

Edmund was only eighteen years of age when, in A.D. 940, he succeeded to the crown of his brother, whose activity and vigour had secured to England for a few years before his death a profound repose. The Welsh paid their tribute with the utmost regularity; the Danes, who had so frequently experienced his prowess, desired no better than to remain at peace; and the unfortunate Anlaff, who, after the defeat of his hopes, had once more retired to Ireland during the reign of his conqueror, did not renew his attempts.

No sooner was it known, however, that Athelstan was dead, and a mere youth upon the throne, than the Danes prepared to revolt. Several years of fighting followed, but the accounts are so conflicting that it is almost impossible to harmonise them. According to one version, Anlaff, who was informed of all that passed, deemed that the time was come for the prosecution of his claims, and entered into a treaty with Olaf, King of Norway, for assistance, which being liberally granted, he once more appeared in his father's kingdom of Northumbria, and obtained possession of York, the inhabitants opening the gates to him.

This example being followed by most of the neighbouring towns, the long-exiled prince soon found himself in a position to carry the war into Mercia, where his countrymen received him as a deliverer, and by their united efforts many strong places were recovered which Edward had taken from them.

Edmund, though both young and inexperienced, appears to have inherited the courage of his race. The success of the enemy, instead of depressing him, rendered him more eager for battle; he marched at once to the north, and Anlaff, with equal confidence, advanced to meet him.

A battle was fought between these rival princes near Chester, in which success was so equally balanced, that it was impossible to say on which side it preponderated. Then, according to the chronicler Simeon, the Archbishops of York and Canterbury, to avoid any further effusion of blood, prevailed upon the parties to make peace. Anlaff was permitted to retain possession of the kingdom of Northumbria, and the whole country north of Watling Street.

The Northumbrians had not reason long to rejoice at the restoration of Anlaff, which they had so ardently desired; for this prince, having contracted a large debt with the King of Norway for the troops he had lent him, was anxious to pay it; and to this end laid heavy taxes on the people, by which he forfeited their affection. The inhabitants of the ancient kingdom of Deira were the first that revolted, and having sent for Reginald, his brother Godfrid's son, crowned him king at York.

Reginald was no sooner on the throne, than he armed against his uncle, who was also preparing to dispossess him. The quarrel between these two kings incited Edmund to march towards the north at the head of an army, to appease the troubles there, being apprehensive they might give occasion to the foreign Danes to return into England. He arrived upon the borders of Northumbria, when the uncle and nephew, wholly intent upon their private quarrel, thought of nothing less than repulsing the English. He probably might with ease have made himself master of that kingdom; but he was contented with procuring peace between the two kings, in such a manner that Reginald was to keep the crown he had lately received; but at the same time, Edmund obliged them both to swear allegiance to him, and be baptised, himself standing godfather.

This forced peace did not last long, and Edmund had hardly returned into Wessex, when the two Danish princes took up arms to free themselves from his yoke, having engaged the Mercian Danes and the King of Cumberland to espouse their quarrel. Whereupon Edmund immediately marched into Mercia, and before the Danes there could be joined by the Northumbrians, took from them the five boroughs, *i.e.* Leicester, Stamford, Derby, Nottingham, and Lincoln; and then, advancing with the same expedition towards Northumbria, he surprised the two kings before they had drawn their forces together. This sudden attack threw the Northumbrians into such disorder, that their rulers, fearing to fall into the hands of Edmund, believed it their only refuge to abandon the island, where they could not possibly remain in safety, so closely were they pursued; and as their flight deprived the Danes of all hope of withstanding Edmund, they threw down their arms, and gave him allegiance. According to other accounts, the attack upon the Mercian Danes is placed earlier in the reign.

Before he returned to Wessex, Edmund resolved to punish the King of Cumberland, who, without cause, had taken part with the Danes; and he easily subdued that petty kingdom, whose forces bore no proportion to his own, and presented it to the King of Scotland, in order to attach him to his interest, and prevent him from again assisting the Northumbrians; reserving, however, the sovereignty of it, and obliging that king to do him homage, and appear at the court of England at the time of the solemn festivals, if summoned.

Edmund was not wholly employed in military affairs; and some of his laws still exist which demonstrate how desirous he was of the people's welfare and happiness. Having observed that pecuniary punishments were not sufficient to put a stop to robberies, which were generally committed by people who had nothing to lose, he ordered that, in gangs of robbers, the oldest of them should be condemned to be hanged.

Probably this prince would have rendered his people happy, had his reign been longer; but a fatal accident robbed him of his life. On May 26th, 946, as he was solemnising a festival at Pucklechurch, in Gloucestershire, Liofa, a notorious robber, though banished the kingdom for his crimes, had the effrontery to enter and seat himself at one of the tables in the hall where the king was at dinner. Edmund, enraged at his insolence, commanded him to be apprehended; but perceiving he was drawing his dagger to defend himself, leaped up in fury, and, catching hold of him by the hair, threw him on the ground. Liofa stabbed him in the breast with his dagger, and the King immediately expired upon the body of his murderer. Thus died Edmund in 946, in the twenty-fourth year of his age, and the sixth of his reign. By Elgiva, his wife, he had two sons, Edwy and Edgar, who did not succeed him, on account of their minority; Edred, his brother, being placed on the throne by the unanimous election of the Witena-gemot. His glorious deeds had deservedly gained for Edmund the title of "Magnificent."

Edred was a mere youth when he succeeded to the crown, a circumstance which the Northumbrians were not slow to take advantage of, and instantly attempted to throw off their allegiance; but after a variety of contests they were ultimately subdued, and Earl Oswulf appointed to govern them. The last-mentioned personage, who was an Englishman, appears to have acted with no less vigour than prudence, erecting many strongholds, and placing efficient garrisons within them, to keep the natives of the newly-conquered province in subjection. These methods were so efficacious that Northumbria remained for a long time tranquil, and the descendants of Oswulf were earls there for quite a hundred years.

The young king, perfectly master of his own kingdom, and respected by the Scots, had now time to direct his attention to religious affairs, and during his brief reign contributed largely to churches and monasteries. To this course of action he was led by the powerful influence of Dunstan, one of the most remarkable personages in old English history, and the first of those great ecclesiastical statesmen who have played a leading part in the annals of Britain.

Dunstan was born in the year 925, and being of aristocratic family, rapidly obtained advancement in the Church. By the age of eighteen he had become abbot of Glastonbury, and from the first proved an extremely able administrator, restoring the discipline of the monastery, and rebuilding the great church. His personal character appears to have been morbid and eccentric, but the stories told concerning him come for the most part from his enemies, and it is extremely difficult to know what to make of them. He had been an old playmate of Edred's, and the weak and sickly king was entirely in his hands. Dunstan by no means confined his activity to ecclesiastical matters, but took an active part in the war against the Northumbrian Danes. It was probably on his advice that the country was bestowed as an earldom on Oswulf. His object here, as elsewhere, was to allow the smaller kingdoms to maintain their individuality, their own laws and customs, subject to the leadership of Wessex. Such a policy was naturally not popular in Wessex, and when Edred, "the Chosen," as he was called, died in 955, Dunstan was doomed to a period of eclipse.

DUNSTAN REBUKING EDWY IN THE PRESENCE OF ELGIVA. *(See p. 52.)*

In 955 the Witena-gemot chose Edwy, the son of Edmund, for their king, and within a short while Dunstan was banished from the kingdom. As to the facts of his fall very little is accurately known; indeed, the annals of the time are so completely under the influence of party spirit, that it is impossible to make out what is true and what is false. The partisans of Dunstan represent Edwy as being exceedingly depraved. About the time of his election he married Ælfgifu, or Elgiva, as the Latin form of the name was written. It appears that she was within the degrees prohibited by the church of Rome, and Dunstan's party not only tried to prevent the marriage, but afterwards spoke of the queen as if she were Edwy's mistress. According to a well-known story, Edwy on the day of his coronation retired from the feast at

EDGAR THE PEACEABLE BEING ROWED DOWN THE DEE BY EIGHT TRIBUTARY PRINCES. (*See p.* 54.)

which all the notabilities of the realm were present to enjoy the society of his bride. Dunstan, angry at what he considered a slight upon the company, rushed into the apartment and dragged the king from her. Such conduct is quite possible in the case of an overbearing man like the abbot, and fully explains any dislike that the king and queen may have entertained towards him. His fall took place about 956; and, as far as we can gather, it was effected through his enemies at Glastonbury, who were angry at the zeal with which he pushed his reforms.

Edwy's triumph was, however, exceedingly brief. In the year 957 all England north of the Thames rebelled against him, and chose Edgar, his brother, to be their king. Dunstan, who probably was by no means unacquainted with what was going on, was immediately recalled, and in a very short space of time made Bishop of Rochester and of London. In the following year the Archbishop of Canterbury compelled Edwy to put away his wife, and in 959 Edwy died. There is a story that the unhappy Ælfgifu was branded on the forehead, and banished to Ireland; from which place of exile when she ventured to return, she was seized by her priestly persecutor and hamstrung, of which outrage she died at Gloucester. This repellent tale, however, rests on indifferent authority, and can be at once rejected.

Edwy dying without issue, his brother Edgar was elected as his successor, and thus united the two kingdoms once more. He was known as the "Peaceable," and the kingdom enjoyed under him a tranquillity to which it had long been unaccustomed. Acting with wise foresight he kept up a large fleet, so that the Danes were not able to land, and we read that he punished malefactors with great severity.

His chief war was with the Welsh, who refused to pay tribute, and it was completely successful. William of Malmesbury tells us that Edgar, in order to free the country from the wolves which infested it, commuted the tribute of the Welsh into three hundred wolves' heads, and granted a pardon to criminals on condition that each one within a given time brought in a certain number. In three years, he continues, the tribute was remitted because no more wolves were to be found; a statement which it is impossible to believe, as wolves were plentiful in England and Wales for many a year afterwards. He also broke up Northumberland into the old divisions of Bernicia and Deira, and granted Lothian to Kenneth, King of the Scots, to be held by him in homage. It was after this that the Scottish kings came to live in the south of their kingdom, and made Edinburgh its capital.

For some reason Edgar was not crowned until he had reigned thirteen years. Shortly after the ceremony he visited Chester, and it is said—though the incident is possibly of a legendary character—that he was rowed on the Dee from the city to the minster of St. John by his eight vassal kings, Kenneth of Scotland, Malcolm of Cumberland, Maccus of the Isles, and five Welsh princes.

Edgar continued to give Dunstan fresh marks of esteem, and his regard for him was strengthened by the miracles attributed to him. After the death of Athelm, who held the see of Canterbury, Odo, by birth a Dane, was made archbishop; and to him succeeded Elfsige, who died as he was going to Rome for his pall, in the beginning of Edgar's reign. Brithelm, Bishop of Bath, was elected to the vacant see; but Edgar, being desirous of making Dunstan archbishop, called a general council, where he represented Brithelm as unqualified for so great a station; whereupon he was ordered to return to his old diocese, and Dunstan was chosen in his place. This election not being perfectly canonical, it was deemed necessary that Dunstan should go to Rome, on pretence of receiving his pall, and at the same time justify these proceedings. The Pope, who was perfectly aware how extensive the influence of Dunstan was at the court of England, and who was gratified by the zeal with which he had espoused the interest of the Church of Rome and of the monks, readily confirmed his election, constituting him at the same time his legate in England, with most extensive powers.

In justification of this remarkable man's favourite project of removing the secular clergy from their benefices and supplying their places by the monks, it is enough to say that the former, as a body, had become fearfully corrupt; that luxury, gluttony, avarice, and lust reigned amongst them. Dunstan caused a council of the Church to be held, at which Edgar assisted in person, and made a remarkable oration, which is both curious and interesting as a picture of the corruptions of the clergy of the time, and his subserviency to the views of Dunstan. This harangue, which was most probably written by Dunstan himself, had the desired effect. The three bishops, Dunstan, Ethelwald of Winchester, and Oswald of York, expelled the secular priests, and gave their benefices to the monks, the objects of the king's and archbishop's favour. In many cases, however, expulsion was unnecessary, so depopulated were all the livings through the Danish massacres; and though the celibacy of the clergy which Dunstan enforced was not altogether a step in the right direction, there can be no doubt that the times called for drastic remedies. Nor was the restoration of monasticism the only reform that Dunstan had at heart. "He was," says Bishop Stubbs, "the prime minister, perhaps the inspirer of the consolidating policy of Edgar; he restored through the monastic revival the intercourse between the English church and that of France, and established a more intimate communication with the Apostolic See; in so doing he did what could be done to restore piety and learning. Under his influence the Mercian bishoprics again lift up their heads: the archbishops henceforth go to Rome for their palls: the Frank writers begin to record the lives of the English saints."

The monks were bound in gratitude to make a suitable return for the service Edgar had done them; and, accordingly, their historians have endeavoured, by their excessive commendations, to make him pass for a real saint. But whether from want of attention, or some other reason, they have related some particulars of his life which certainly do not tend to sustain that idea of him. If, indeed, his political actions are only considered, it must be confessed he was a great prince; but a great king and a great saint are two very different characters.

Edgar died in 975, in the thirty-second year of his age. He was afterwards canonised, and miracles are said to have been worked at his shrine.

He left two sons and a daughter. The eldest son, Edward, was the son of Elfleda, surnamed "The Fair," and he was supported by Dunstan; his opponent, who had a large following, was his half-brother Ethelred, the son of Edgar's second wife, Elfrida. The Archbishop, however, in the Witena-gemot promptly and bravely took Edward by the hand, led him towards the church, attended by the other bishops and a crowd of people, and anointed the young prince king, without regarding the opposition of the party against him. The nobles deplored their falling once more under the government of that imperious prelate; but, seeing the people ready to support him, they were compelled to submit.

Edward was but fourteen years old when he began to reign under the guardianship of Dunstan, who immediately took all the power into his hands; and, as soon as he was fixed in the regency, exerted every possible means to maintain the monks in possession of the benefices they had acquired in the last reign, and made use of the king's authority to that end. But he met with more opposition than he contemplated, for as the king was but a minor, the orders given in his name were not so readily complied with. Dunstan assembled several councils about this affair; but most probably all his endeavours would have proved ineffectual, if, by means of several miracles, which were never wanting when requisite, he had not brought the people to believe that Heaven interposed on his behalf.

In one of these councils held at Winchester, the majority being against the monks, they would have infallibly lost their cause, if, on a sudden, a crucifix that hung aloft in the room had not pronounced these words with an audible voice: "It shall not be done; it shall not be done. You have decided the matter well hitherto, and would be to blame to change." Astonished at this oracle, the most obstinate immediately voted for the monks. It is likely that this trick was accomplished by a skilled ventriloquist.

The dispute between the regular and secular clergy gave rise to keen contentions in the kingdom, many of the nobility bitterly resenting the induction of the monks into the benefices. At last a synod was called at Calne, at which Archbishop Dunstan presided. The assembly had not long been met before the floor of the apartment gave way—the only portion which remained intact being the beams which supported the chair of the primate, whose preservation was regarded as a miracle by the common people and the party who acted with him. After such a manifestation of the divine will, for such it was considered, all further opposition ceased; the principal opponents of the measure having perished. A shrewd suspicion has been entertained that Dunstan knew beforehand what was about to occur, even if he had not secretly prepared the catastrophe, seeing that he had warned the king not to be present at the meeting.

The most remarkable circumstance attending Edward was his death, which took place on the 18th of March, 978, after a reign of three years. He had been hunting in the neighbourhood of Corfe Castle, the residence of his step-mother Elfrida, and resolved to pay her a visit. The queen hastened to receive him, and pressed him earnestly to alight; this the prince, who most probably had good reasons to suspect her feelings towards him, declined, observing that he had merely time to accept a draught of wine. In the act of drinking it, he was stabbed in the back by an assassin whom Elfrida had bribed to commit the crime which was to elevate her son Ethelred to the throne.

Finding himself wounded, the youthful monarch set spurs to his horse and fled; but, fainting from loss of blood, fell, and perished miserably. The parties sent after him by the murderess easily traced the route he had taken by the track of blood. The body was brought back to Corfe Castle and thrown into a well, where it was afterwards found, and removed first to Wareham and afterwards to Shaftesbury, where it was interred in a church founded by King Alfred.

Shortly after his death the monks spread the report that miracles were worked at his tomb; the blind were said to have received their sight, the lame to have recovered the use of their limbs. Elfrida, to atone for her crime, founded two convents, to one of which, at Andover, she retired, and passed the rest of her days in penitence. Edward was canonised by the Roman Church, and is generally known as St. Edward the Martyr.

ASSASSINATION OF EDWARD THE MARTYR. (*See p. 56.*)

CRUCIFIXION OF ST. PETER AND MARTYRDOM OF OTHER SAINTS. (*From Harleian MSS.* 603.)

CHAPTER VII.

ETHELRED THE UNREADY.

The Retirement of Dunstan—Character of Ethelred—Sweyn in Denmark—Character of the Invasions and the Resistance—The Danegeld—The Arrival of Sweyn—Ethelred's Expedition—The Massacre of St. Brice's Day—Return of Sweyn—Defeats of the English—Edric Streona—Failure of the English Fleet—Treacheries of Edric—Death of St. Alphege—Sweyn's Conquest of England and his Death—Return of Ethelred and Departure of Canute—Misgovernment of the King—Canute's Return and the Death of Ethelred.

On the death of Edward, his half-brother Ethelred was elected by the Witena-gemot, much to the dislike of Dunstan, who, it is said, foretold how disastrous the new reign would be. And now the great prelate's active career came to an end. His enemies had of late years been rapidly growing in strength, and it only needed the accession of a king who was unfriendly towards him to cause him to retire to his diocese. There he spent the remainder of his life (he died in 988), occupying his time in administering its affairs, and in cultivating literature and art. Faults he may have had of disposition and temper; but a careful investigation of the facts of his life would appear to prove that, although he made mistakes more than once, his career as a whole was eminent for statesmanship, and resulted in benefit to his country.

Bereft of his guiding hand, the kingdom was soon in a miserable plight. Even Dunstan would have found it difficult to keep the ship from sinking, and Ethelred was utterly unfit for such a task. His character shows no redeeming features; he was weak, cowardly, and revengeful; whenever he made an effort it was too late or in the wrong direction. He surrounded himself with foreign favourites on whose advice he trusted, and sought to oppose the Danish invaders, not by organising armies, but by marriage alliances and diplomacy.

The third period of the Danish invasions begins in this reign; when the Danes proceed to conquer England for their own. The reason why the old enemy now became particularly formidable is to be sought in the changes which were taking place in the north of Europe. There Denmark had become a formidable monarchy in close alliance with Norway and Sweden. For the first ten years of Ethelred's reign, however, it was not in a position to become aggressive, owing to the struggle that was going on between Harold Bluetooth and his son Sweyn. This terminated in the triumph of the latter, who drove out his father and re-established idolatry throughout the land. Having made himself supreme in Denmark, Sweyn determined to add England to his dominions.

It was owing to the fact that Denmark was divided by a struggle for the throne, that for the first ten years of the reign the descents upon England were of an intermittent character; nevertheless, they were extremely harassing, seeing that the English had not only an enormous extent of coast to guard, but never knew the exact spot at which their enemies would land.

Frequently when their army was in one part of the kingdom the invaders would debark at another, and before it could march to the place threatened, the barbarians would collect their booty and retire to their ships. The only efficient remedy for these misfortunes would have been to equip a powerful fleet, so as to have encountered the Danes at sea; but the youth and inexperience of the king prevented such a step, and the island was exposed, in consequence, to outrage, murder, and pillage.

Ethelred's efforts to stop these raids seem to have been inadequate, and he made matters worse by quarrelling with his great men. He had some dispute with the Bishop of Rochester, and proceeded to ravage his lands, oblivious of the fact that a disunited realm would fall an easy prey to a determined invader. All the English, however, were not equally unpatriotic; for when, in 991, the Danes, headed by two brothers, Justin and Guthmund, with whom was Olaf, the king of the Norwegians, invaded the country and plundered Ipswich, and then went into Essex, they were met at Maldon by Byrhtnoth, the alderman of the East Saxons. In the battle which followed, the alderman was slain, after a very brave resistance, and a fine old-English song was written about the fight, the greater part of which is still extant.

In spite of this bold, spirited conduct on the part of the English hosts, which showed that the nation had plenty of valour left in it, Ethelred began in this year the craven and short-sighted practice of buying off the Danes. For this purpose a tax, called the Danegeld, was levied, probably on cultivated lands, and was continued on one pretext or another long after the occasion for it had passed away. The first bribe paid to the Danes amounted to ten thousand pounds, and it obviously acted only as a further incentive to the rapacious hordes.

Gradually the hopes of the English grew very faint indeed, and we begin to hear of treachery and of battles converted into defeats by desertions to the enemy. At last, in 994, Sweyn himself appeared, accompanied by Olaf of Norway. The two kings, with a powerful fleet, sailed up the Thames, with the intention of making themselves masters of London. The courageous resistance of the inhabitants, however, obliged them to retire without obtaining possession of the city.

Determined not to be disappointed in the chief object of their expedition, which was plunder, the two Danish kings directed their troops into the interior of the island, levying contributions in Kent, Sussex, and Hampshire. The sufferings of the inhabitants became intolerable.

Ethelred once more had recourse to money, and promised the enemy a large sum, on condition that they ceased their cruelties and quitted the kingdom: the offer was accepted. The weak, cowardly monarch afterwards received the King of Norway as a friend and ally. Olaf quitted the country after taking an oath, which he kept, never to come back any more.

His colleague, Sweyn, had formed far different projects. When he returned home, he left his fleet at Southampton to keep the English in awe; and also to receive the payment of the money promised. No sooner had he taken his departure than his admiral became impatient for the tribute.

So matters went on until the year 1000, the Danes making descents upon all parts of the coast, and defeating such bodies of Englishmen as ventured in the field against them. Ethelred meanwhile did nothing to help his unfortunate subjects. He even allowed his forces to harry and oppress them. And as if the Danes were not enough to occupy him, he actually made an abortive expedition against the King of Cumberland, because he refused to pay the Danegeld, and even sent a fleet to harry the lands of Richard the Good of Normandy because he received Danish ships in his ports. The English were driven away ignominiously, and Ethelred shortly afterwards made peace with Richard, and in 1002 married his sister Emma, called the Pearl of Normandy on account of her beauty.

In 1001 the Danes invaded Devonshire, but were driven off from Exeter, and defeated at Pinhoe; nevertheless, they gained much booty, and ravaged the southern coast until they were bought off once more with a large sum of money. Suddenly Ethelred bethought himself of a device by which he might, at one blow, rid himself of a great portion of his opponents. As might be expected of a weak prince, his project was a cruel one, being neither more nor less than the massacre of all the Danes who had remained behind in England. To carry out this barbarous as well as useless policy, a vast conspiracy was entered into; and on the 13th of November, St. Brice's day, 1002, all the invaders were put to death, with circumstances of the most shocking barbarity.

The sister of Sweyn was not spared. Her name was Gunilda, and she is said to have been married to a noble Dane settled in England, named Pallig. Being a Christian, she had exerted all her influence with her brother to bring about the peace. Her children were first murdered in her presence, and their unhappy mother was afterwards slain.

Sweyn received the news of this massacre from some Danes, who succeeded in getting on board a vessel ready to sail for Denmark. Their relation of the cruelties of the English to those of his nation would have been sufficient to arouse him; but when informed of his sister's barbarous murder, he was seized with all the rage that such a crime was likely to excite in a vindictive nature. He solemnly swore he would never rest till he had revenged the atrocious outrage. It was not, therefore, with intent to plunder that he made a second expedition into England, but to destroy the whole country with fire and sword. However, as he did not doubt that Ethelred would take precautions to oppose his entrance, he would not sail without securing a place where he might safely land his troops. Exeter was then governed by a Norman, Hugh, placed in that important trust by the influence of the queen, in full confidence that, as her countryman, her husband might rely on his devotion and fidelity.

To this man Sweyn secretly despatched an emissary, with the offer of a great reward, provided he would assist him in his enterprise. The traitor yielded to the temptation, and allowed not only the fleet of the invader to enter his ports, but the Danes to land without offering the least opposition.

After debarking his forces, Sweyn marched them to Exeter, and as the first-fruits of his vengeance not only massacred the inhabitants, but after plundering the city broke down its wall. Wherever the furious monarch led his army the same cruelties were repeated; submission was useless, for he knew not the meaning of the word "mercy."

He then appeared in Wiltshire, where the people were prepared to meet him. But they had a traitor in command, who pretended to be ill, and so the English levies dispersed. Sweyn, therefore, burnt some of the chief towns, and then sailed homewards for the winter.

Early the next year, however, he returned, landing, it is supposed, at Yarmouth, and took the city of Norwich, which he burned to the ground. Ulfcytel, the alderman of the East Angles, gave him an immense sum of money to induce him to spare that part of the country from any further ravages. Regardless of his promises, the invader had no sooner received the tribute than he attacked Thetford, and destroyed it; which breach of faith so incensed Ulfcytel, that he collected as many troops as possible, and posted himself between the invaders and the fleet, in the hope of cutting them off. The Danish king marched back to give him battle, and the English were beaten, after a severe contest. The Danes were afterwards driven from England by famine

At the termination of the scarcity, another expedition of the enemy landed at Sandwich, in Kent, and Ethelred levied an army to oppose them; on hearing which, the Danes retreated to the Isle of Thanet, well knowing that the English, who served at their own expense, would soon disperse. The event proved that their calculation was a just one; tired of waiting for an enemy who refused to come from their stronghold, the soldiers of Ethelred quickly melted away, and the unlucky king procured a peace only upon the payment of £36,000.

Ethelred, on their departure, gave one of his daughters in marriage to Edric, surnamed Streona (the gainer), the instigator of the massacre of St. Brice's Day, whom he had lately created Alderman of Mercia; but his new son-in-law, instead of assisting him, as he had a right to expect, leagued with the Danes, and betrayed the kingdom on every occasion. The year after the treaty, the Danish king demanded a similar sum of £36,000, pretending that it was a yearly tribute which the English had agreed to pay. Ethelred, by the advice of his council, employed the money in fitting out a powerful fleet, the command of which was given to Brihric, the brother of the new Alderman of Mercia. This measure obliged the enemy to retire.

Brihric was no sooner in command than he used his authority to ruin Wulfnoth, a noble who was his enemy, and began to accuse him of crimes to the king, who lent but too willing an ear to his rival. Finding his ruin determined upon, Wulfnoth persuaded nine of the captains of the fleet to put to sea with him, which they did, plundering the English coasts and committing fearful ravages. The admiral, incensed at his escape, set out with eighty ships to give him chase; but a terrible storm arising, he lost a great part of them, and the rest fell into the hands of Wulfnoth. Thus was the fleet which should have been the safeguard of the kingdom lost and destroyed.

Taking advantage of this state of affairs, the Danes, who had their spies both in the court and country of England, prepared another expedition. Two fleets arrived in the kingdom—one in East Anglia, under Thurkill; and the second in the Isle of Thanet, commanded by two leaders, Heming and Eglaf. They attacked the city of Canterbury, and would, doubtless, have destroyed it, had not the inhabitants ransomed it at an enormous sum.

Whilst the Danes were pillaging Kent, Ethelred drew an army together to oppose their ravages; and as soon as he was ready, he posted himself between them and their ships to prevent them from embarking and carrying off their booty. Probably he might have executed his project, and gained much advantage, considering the superiority of his forces, if Edric had not found means to relieve the Danes. The traitor, perceiving their danger, represented to the king, his father-in-law, that it would be more prudent to let them retire, than hazard a battle, which might prove fatal to him; and this pernicious advice made such impression on the weak-minded monarch, that he suffered the Danes to depart with all their plunder, unmolested. But instead of sailing for Denmark, as it was expected, they threw themselves into the Isle of Thanet; from which, during the whole winter, they made incursions into the neighbouring counties, and even made several attempts upon London; in which, however, they were always repulsed. During this period, Ulfcytel of East Anglia, willing once more to try the fortune of a battle in the defence of his territory, had the misfortune to be overthrown.

Hitherto the Danes had wanted cavalry, on account of the difficulty of transporting horses from Denmark; but as soon as they were in possession of East Anglia, which abounded with horses, they mounted part of their troops, and by that means extended their conquests. Shortly after, they subdued Essex, Middlesex, Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Northamptonshire, Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire, Wiltshire, and Devonshire, whilst Ethelred, who had scarce anything left, kept himself shut up in London, not daring to take the field and stop their progress. In all the above-named counties, London and Canterbury were the only places in the king's power. But at length the last was attacked so vigorously that it was captured, plundered, and reduced to ashes; and Alphege, the archbishop, being taken prisoner, was afterwards murdered by these barbarians at Greenwich, to which place, the station of their ships, they had brought him.

In the old church of Greenwich, on the top of the partition wall between the nave and the chancel, was formerly the following inscription: "This church was erected and dedicated to the glory of God, and the memory of St. Alphege, Archbishop of Canterbury, here slain by the Danes, because he would not ransom his life by an unreasonable sum of money, An. 1012." He was first buried at St. Paul's in London, and afterwards removed to Canterbury. He was honoured as a martyr, and stands in the Roman Martyrology on the 19th of April. The money, £8,000, being paid, the greater part of the Danish fleet dispersed.

In 1013, however, Sweyn returned, and proceeded to conquer the whole of England. He began from the north-east, and soon the Danish settlements had submitted to him, and their example was followed by all the English to the north of Watling Street. Mercia was forced to yield after it had been cruelly ravaged, and then the Danish warrior took Oxford and Winchester, the chief towns of the old kingdom of Wessex. Leaving his son Canute with the fleet, he on a sudden laid siege to London, where Ethelred was shut up. Though he was but ill provided with necessaries to besiege in form a place of such importance, he imagined the citizens would be terrified at his menaces; but finding they were not moved by them he desisted from his enterprise, and passed on and ravaged the western parts of Wessex, where he found no opposition to his arms. However, as he could not be satisfied whilst London was out of his power, he resolved to besiege it once more; but whilst he was preparing for the siege with greater precaution than before, he had information of Ethelred's departure from thence. This worthless prince, ever dreading to fall into the hands of an enemy he had so cruelly injured, and perceiving himself unsafe in England, retired into Normandy with all his family, upon which the Londoners resolved to submit to the King of Denmark, to whom all the rest of the kingdom was now subject; and now Sweyn was looked upon as King of England without any opposition, no one in the kingdom daring to dispute his title.

It does not appear that Sweyn was ever crowned. His first act of sovereignty was to levy a heavy tax to pay his Danish troops, by whose assistance he had conquered England. But at any rate his reign was exceedingly brief, for he died in 1014. Some writers say that he was poisoned, others that he died of a cold, while a third set declare that he was killed by the apparition of St. Edmund, formerly King of East Anglia, armed with a lance, in order to save the town and monastery in which his canonised bones lay from being plundered by the invaders. This is only a legendary version of what was probably a fact, that shortly before his death Sweyn had contemplated an attack on the town of Bury St. Edmunds.

MARTYRDOM OF ALPHEGE (*See p.* 60.)

On the death of Sweyn, Canute, his son, was proclaimed king; but their common danger had given something like energy and combination to the councils of the English. They recalled Ethelred from his exile in Normandy, and pledged themselves to support him on the throne against the Danes, whose government was arbitrary, cruel, and oppressive.

Ethelred at first was unwilling to trust to their promises, being apprehensive of a design to deliver him into the hands of his enemies; but being encouraged by the reception met with by his son, whom he had sent before to sound the people's inclinations, he returned to England, and was welcomed with every demonstration of joy; and his subjects swore allegiance to him again, as if he had begun a new reign, his flight being considered as a sort of abdication of the crown. He, on his part, promised to reform whatever was amiss; and the eagerness of the English to throw off a foreign yoke, made them flock to the king with such zeal and haste that he soon found himself at the head of a powerful army. His first expedition plainly showed his misfortunes had made no alteration in him; for instead of marching against the Danes, he employed his forces to be revenged on the men of Lindsey —one of the three divisions of Lincolnshire; the other two being named Holland and Kesteven. The inhabitants of the first-named division, it appeared, had provided the Danes with horses, and had also offered to join them. After Ethelred had punished these traitors, he prepared to march and fight the enemy, who little expected so sudden a revolution. Although Canute was undoubtedly a great prince, and had the same forces his father Sweyn had conquered England with, he did not think fit to hazard a battle; but, on the contrary, before Ethelred was advanced near enough to oblige him to fight, he led his troops to the sea-side, and embarking them, set sail for Denmark. Before his departure, he ordered the hands, noses, and ears of the hostages he had in his power to be cut off, leaving them thus mangled on the shore.

As soon as Ethelred found himself freed from the Danes, he took no heed of his promise to his subjects, but on the contrary resumed his old maxims, and imposed, on various pretences, excessive taxes, which raised much murmuring among the nobles and people. To these causes for public discontent he added others of a more private nature, which destroyed all the hopes entertained of his amendment. Morkar and Sifforth, the chief men of the five Danish boroughs, were sacrificed to his avarice. To draw these two earls into his power, the king convened the Witena-gemot at Oxford, where he caused them to be murdered, and then seized their estates, as if they had been condemned by the common forms of justice. Algitha, widow of Sifforth, was shut up in a monastery, to which circumstance she was indebted for her later good fortune; for Edmund, the king's eldest son, passing that way some time after, was desirous to see one so renowned for her beauty, and fell so desperately in love with her, that he married her even against his father's consent.

The calm enjoyed by England lasted only a year, for in 1015 Canute came again. Edward being sick, his brave son Edmund, called Ironside for his deeds of valour, and Edric Streona were sent against the enemy with two armies gathered from the north and south of England. Edric, however, true to his previous villainies, first attempted to murder the gallant youth, and then went over to Canute with a considerable body of troops and forty ships of war. Edmund retired northward, leaving Canute in possession of Wessex.

The next year was the last of this disastrous reign. There was much resultless fighting in which Ethelred refused to support his son, because there were traitors in the English camp. Gradually the area of war moved northwards, and Canute entered York, placing his own earl, Eric the Dane, over the Northumbrians. (We find that the Danish title of earl now begins to supplant that of alderman, which had been used by the English for the military governor of a shire.) Edmund thereupon gave up the useless struggle, and joined his father in London. He had not long been there when the king died, in 1016, at the early age of forty-eight, having done all that a false and incapable man could, during the reign, to bring the nation to ruin.

CHAPTER VIII.

EDMUND IRONSIDE AND CANUTE.

A Double Election—Battles of Pen Selwood and Sherstone—Treacheries of Edric—Division of the Kingdom—Death of Edmund—Election of Canute—His Treatment of his Rivals—The Four Earldoms—Canute's marriage with Emma—His Popular Government—His Expeditions to Northern Europe—Submission of the King of Scots—Canute at Rome—The Story of his Rebuke to his Courtiers—His Death.

IMMEDIATELY on the death of Ethelred, his son Edmund, who had given so many proofs of courage and devotion to this unhappy country, was elected king by the citizens of London. But most of the chief men of the kingdom, weary of the war, elected Canute, and joined him at Southampton, where they swore allegiance to him. Thus there were two kings in England, and of the two Edmund had a great advantage in being the holder of London.

This city the Danish monarch felt it necessary to possess; and in the absence of the new king, who was gathering troops in Wessex, he laid siege to it with a very considerable force; but the citizens defended themselves so well, that Canute broke up the siege and went back into Wessex in search of Edmund.

Both parties were impatient to decide their claims by battle. The armies met at Pen Selwood, where the English gained a victory. After which a second battle took place at Sherstone, in Wiltshire, and so obstinately was it contested that neither side could claim the victory, although the English, it is recorded, were nearly being defeated by the cunning of Edric Streona, who fought on the side of the Danes. Perceiving that the English troops fought with such desperate courage, he cut off the head of Osmer, a soldier who so resembled Edmund that he might easily have been mistaken for him. Placing the bleeding head upon his lance, he advanced with it to the front of the English army, and exclaimed, "Fly, English, fly! Edmund is dead." This stratagem had nearly succeeded; the soldiers of Edmund began to waver, on seeing which the king threw aside his helmet and rode bareheaded through the ranks, when he was received with cheers of delight.

The battle lasted till night, without any decisive advantage on either side. In the morning Edmund intended to renew the battle, but Canute, who had other intentions, retired to his ships and set sail, hastily landed his forces, and besieged London a second time with no better success than the first.

As soon as Edric saw that Canute's fortunes were on the decline, he changed sides again, and Edmund, yielding to the extraordinary influence which this villain appears to have possessed, admitted him into his confidence. He soon had to rue his folly, for after winning three battles against the Danes, and freeing London of their presence, Edmund would have utterly overthrown them at Otford had not the advice of Edric dissuaded him from continuing the pursuit. His pretext was that, if hardly pressed, despair might cause them to rally, and convert defeat into victory. Perhaps his idea was to weary out both sides, and so establish himself upon the ruins of their power.

A fifth battle was accordingly fought at Ashdon, in Essex, and here Edric once more acted the part of a traitor, for perceiving that the Danes were being put to flight, he drew off his men, and Canute finally won a crushing victory, slaying many of the chief men on the side of the English. It is hard to believe that his conduct on this occasion can have been as openly base as the chroniclers represent it, for we find that he is still trusted by the king, who, undaunted by his previous disasters, prepared to renew the conflict yet a sixth time. The two armies, therefore, confronted one another yet again, but no battle took place. A famous story is told concerning the two kings on this occasion, but it is not found in the more trustworthy accounts. It is said that Edmund proposed that they should decide their claims to the crown in single combat; an offer which his rival declined, under the plea that he was small of stature and of a sickly constitution; but added that, if the English king wished to avoid the effusion of blood, he was quite willing to consent to a division of the kingdom.

The more probable account of what occurred is that Edric Streona persuaded Edmund that it would be unwise to risk another battle, and that he had better agree to a partition of the kingdom. Anyhow, no battle was fought, and the two kings met on the island of Olney, in the Severn, and agreed that Edmund should be over-king, and should possess Wessex, Essex, and East Anglia, with London, while Canute should have Mercia and Northumberland. As Professor Freeman points out, the division differed from that made between Alfred and Guthrum, for Edmund gave to Canute all that part of Mercia which Alfred had kept, while he retained East Anglia and Essex, which by the old partition had belonged to Guthrum.

Edmund did not live to enjoy the rest he had won so dearly for many weeks, for on St. Andrew's Day, 1017, he died, and his death, like other unexpected events of the period, was attributed to Edric Streona. Upon this point, however, nothing can be asserted with safety, despite the circumstantial accounts of the chroniclers. Edmund had reigned only seven months, but in that brief space he had proved himself a very different man to his father.

On the death of Edmund Ironside, Canute's position in England was naturally much stronger than when he was maintaining an obstinate contest with the brave English king. Edmund's children were very young, and their claims were not to be entertained when it was of the utmost importance to have a man of courage and resource at the head of affairs. There was, however, a formidable competitor in Edwy, the late king's brother, who was much beloved by the people. But the Witena-gemot, weary of the contest for the kingdom, was convened at London, and Canute was chosen king over all England. It is said that in order to weaken the claims of his rivals he exacted from the assembly a promise that none of Edmund's sons or brothers should be king, and they even advised that Edwy should be outlawed. The pretext for this exclusion was that no mention had been made of the members of the line of Wessex in the treaty between Canute and Edmund.

MEETING OF EDMUND IRONSIDE AND CANUTE ON THE ISLAND OF OLNEY. (*See p.* 63.)

Edwy was outlawed in 1017, and shortly afterwards died, murdered apparently by order of Canute, although there is another story that an unsuccessful attempt at his assassination was made shortly before his outlawry. In any case he disappears from history. The children of Ethelred and Emma were in Normandy with their mother. Edmund's two sons, Edward and Edmund, were sent to the King of Sweden, with secret orders, it is said, that they should be put to death. But Olaf, though placed in an embarrassing position by this infamous request, resolved to spare them. However, to avoid being drawn into war with his powerful neighbour he in his turn sent them to

Stephen, King of Hungary, to be educated at his court. There Edmund died young; but Edward lived and married Agatha, the niece of Stephen's queen. She bore him Edgar Atheling, of whom we shall hear again, and Margaret, who afterwards became Queen of the Scots.

Canute, having rid himself of his rivals, divided England into four parts, keeping Wessex under his immediate rule, making Danes the Earls of East Anglia and Northumberland, and giving Mercia to Edric Streona. But he speedily caused Edric to be put to death, "and very rightly too," says the Chronicle, because no doubt he feared to have such a perfidious man among his chief men and Edric's body was thrown into the Thames. These earldoms continued until the Conquest, and their holders played a great part in the history of the subsequent reigns. It is remarkable that this arrangement of the government of the kingdom was very much in agreement with the policy of Dunstan.

In the same year Canute put away his Danish wife and contracted an alliance of a very wise character if regarded as a measure of precaution. Alfred and Edward, Ethelred's sons, were still a source of anxiety to him, and a quarrel was, above all things, to be avoided with Richard Duke of Normandy. In order to acquire the friendship of the duke, he paid addresses to Queen Emma, the widow of Ethelred, and the curious marriage was concluded. It is said, but the story is probably without foundation, that she made him promise that the crown of England should go to the issue of her second marriage, to the exclusion of her children by Ethelred and of Canute's two sons.

Canute was an admirable ruler, although we find him, in 1018, laying a very heavy tax upon the kingdom, especially in London, which, it will be remembered, had held out so bravely for Ethelred. The money, however, which amounted to £83,000, was used for a good purpose, namely, to pay off the Danish fleet. With the fleet departed the larger part of the Danish army, a body-guard remaining which was known as the King's *House-carls*, and which formed a little standing army. Canute had doubtless seen that the English national levies were not to be relied upon at a pinch, and wished to have a trusty force with which to oppose a sudden invasion.

Having thus established himself upon the throne, he proceeded to rule England by the English and for the English. The chief Danes were banished from the kingdom, or put to death one by one, and their places were taken by Englishmen. Leofric became Earl of Mercia in the room of Edric Streona, and the famous Godwin was made Earl of Wessex, which the king no longer kept under his special care. He also renewed the English laws and customs, King Edgar's laws, as they were called, and made no distinction between Dane and Englishman in the administration of justice. He sought also to gain the favour of the people by religious foundations, by gifts to monasteries and churches, by doing reverence to the saints and holy places they revered, by preferring the churchmen they honoured, and by many other gracious acts. A very politic proceeding was his translation of the bones of St. Alphege from Greenwich to Canterbury, by which he sought to bury the bitter memories of the past.

But though Canute spent most of his time in England, and valued his English possessions more than any other of his lands, he was during the greater part of his reign occupied in foreign wars with the object of building up a grand empire in northern Europe. It was in the first of these wars that Earl Godwin gained his confidence. In 1019, Canute having settled his power beyond all danger of a revolution, made a voyage to Denmark, in order to make a campaign against the King of Sweden; and he carried along with him a large body of the English, under the command of Earl Godwin. The Earl was stationed next the Swedish camp; and observing a favourable opportunity, which he was obliged suddenly to seize, he attacked the enemy in the night, drove them from their trenches, threw them into disorder, pursued his advantage, and obtained a decisive victory over them. Next morning, Canute, seeing the English camp abandoned, imagined that those disaffected troops had deserted to the enemy: he was agreeably surprised to find that they were at that time engaged in pursuit of the discomfited Swedes. He was so pleased with this success, and with the manner of obtaining it, that he bestowed his niece in marriage on Godwin, and treated him ever after with entire confidence and regard.

The wars with Sweden terminated in the submission of that kingdom to Canute as over-king, and in 1028 he attacked Norway, and drove the just, but unwarlike Olaf from the land. Canute was thus ruler over Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, and none of the English kings, either before or since his time, have ever been rulers over so large a portion of Europe.

It was not likely that so powerful a monarch would tolerate the existence of an independent kingdom to the north of England, and Malcolm of

Scotland forced on an issue by invading Northumberland at the beginning of the reign. In 1031, therefore, Canute found occasion to approach the Scottish frontier with a powerful army. The King of Scots had no choice but to submit, and acknowledge Canute as his lord, and his nephew, Duncan, did homage for Cumberland at the same time. Duncan is well known to us through Shakespeare's play, and it is remarkable that among the under-kings who did homage to Canute was a certain Mælboethe, who is doubtless identical with Macbeth.

Meanwhile England was at peace, in spite of a threatened invasion from Normandy in 1028, which was driven back by storms in the Channel. Canute, despite the crimes which had stained his earlier career, was developing more and more into an admirable monarch and good man. In 1027 he made a pilgrimage to Rome, and wrote from thence a letter to the English people full of penitence for his past misdeeds, promises for the future, and much elevated moral sentiment.

In particular he ordered the royal officers to do justice to all men of whatever estate, and not to exact money wrongfully under pretext of the royal necessities. "I have no need," he says, "of money gathered by unrighteousness." There is also a famous story told of him by Henry of Huntingdon, which shows that he was not blinded by the greatness of his position, but estimated his authority at its true value. He was at Southampton; and there, in answer probably to some over-charged flatteries from his courtiers, bade a chair be placed at the water's edge, challenging the sea at the same time to wet the feet of him whose ships sailed over it, and against whose land it dashed. The tide came rushing in, and soon it had wetted the feet and clothes of the king. Then he turned to his followers and said, "Behold how feeble is the power of kings and of men, for the waves will not hear my voice. Honour the Lord only, and serve him, for to him all things give obedience."

Men lived hard in those days, and the span of life was short, for when Canute died, in 1035, he was only forty years old.

CHAPTER IX.

EARL GODWIN AND HAROLD.

Harold and Harthacanute—The Murder of Alfred—Accession of Harthacanute—His Reconciliation with Godwin—The Punishment of Worcester—Edward the Confessor—His Election—Influx of Normans—The Family of Godwin—Conduct of Sweyn—The Outbreak at Dover—Godwin's Rebellion and Outlawry—William of Normandy's Visit to England—Godwin's Attempt to Return—His Appearance in the Thames—His Restoration to Power—Death of Godwin—His Place taken by Harold—Siward's Invasion of Scotland and his Death—Death of Leofric and Punishment of Ælfgar—Church Building of Harold and Edward—Harold's Conquest of Wales—Turbulence of Tostig—Death of the Atheling Edward—Candidature of Harold.

By the death of Canute the prospect of a disputed succession was opened up once more. By his second marriage he had issue one son, named Harthacanute; by the first, two, named Sweyn and Harold; but the parentage of these two was considered to be very doubtful. Sweyn nevertheless succeeded to Norway, and Harthacanute to Denmark, but the question was not settled so easily in England. There was a double election, in which the Northerners, under the leadership of Leofric of Mercia, chose Harold; and the Southerners, among whom Godwin was the most influential, chose Harthacanute. Having, however, learnt wisdom by misfortune, the Witena-gemot agreed that the kingdom should be peacefully divided; and as Harthacanute did not come over from Denmark, Earl Godwin, despite his obscure origin, for he appears to have been the son of a wealthy ceorl, was practically King of Wessex. But in 1037, when Harthacanute showed no signs of visiting England, Harold was elected by the Witena-gemot king over all England, and ruled during two years and some months (1037—1040). Of his reign we know absolutely nothing of importance, but he appears to have resembled very little his great father, being in fact more or less of a barbarian.

During the period in which Godwin was administering Wessex for Harthacanute, Alfred, the son of Emma and Ethelred, came over from

Normandy, apparently with some designs on the crown. He met Earl Godwin at Guildford, and shortly afterwards was seized by Harold's servants and taken to Ely, where he was blinded, and soon afterwards died. At the time, Godwin was universally held to have had the chief hand in the deed; although it is not easy to see why he should have been leader in a crime which was committed to further the interests of Harold, whose election he had opposed. The feeling nevertheless was very strong against him, and perhaps he may have used the betrayal to make his peace with Harold. Queen Emma was soon afterwards driven from England, but found a hospitable abode at Bruges, where she was received by Count Baldwin of Flanders. She was believed to have been privy to the death of Alfred, in order that the crown might pass to Harthacanute.

Harthacanute, or Canute the Strong, had never resigned his pretensions to the crown of England; and the country was spared the horrors of a civil war only by the death of Harold. Under pretence of visiting the widowed queen in Flanders, he had assembled a fleet of sixty ships, his real intention being to make a descent upon England. The news of Harold's death induced him at once to set sail. He shortly afterwards entered London in triumph, and was acknowledged king without opposition.

The first act of Harthacanute's government promised badly for his future conduct. He was so enraged at Harold for depriving him of his share of the kingdom, and for the cruel treatment of his half-brother Alfred, that in an impotent desire of revenge against the dead, he ordered his body to be dug up and to be thrown into the Thames; and when it was found by some fishermen, and buried in London, he ordered it again to be dug up, and to be thrown once more into the river; but it was fished up a second time, and then interred with great secrecy. Godwin and the Archbishop of York submitted to be his instruments in this unnatural and brutal action.

The earl knew that he was universally believed to have been an accomplice in the barbarity exercised on Alfred, and that he was on that account obnoxious to Harthacanute; and perhaps he hoped, by displaying this rage against Harold's memory, to free himself from the suspicion of having had any participation in his counsels; but the king preferred an accusation against Godwin for the murder of Alfred, and compelled him to clear himself. Godwin, in order to appease the king, made him a magnificent present of a galley with a gilt stern, rowed by four-score men, who wore each of them a gold bracelet on his arm, weighing sixteen ounces, and were armed and clothed in the most sumptuous manner. Harthacanute, pleased with the splendour of this spectacle, quickly forgot his brother's murder; and on Godwin's proving his innocence by compurgation, he allowed him to be acquitted.

Though Harthacanute, before his accession, had been called over by the vows of the English, he soon lost the affections of the nation by his misconduct; but nothing appeared more grievous to them than his renewing the imposition of Danegeld, and obliging the nation to pay a great sum of money to the fleet which brought him from Denmark. The discontents ran high in many places. In Worcester the populace rose, and put to death two of the collectors (1041). The king, enraged at this opposition, swore vengeance against the city, and ordered three noblemen—Godwin, Earl of Wessex, Siward, Earl of Northumberland, and Leofric, Earl of Mercia — to execute his orders with the utmost rigour. They were obliged to set fire to the city, and deliver it up to be plundered by their soldiers; but they saved the lives of the inhabitants, whom they allowed to fly to a small island on the Severn, called Beverly, till by their intercession they were enabled to appease the anger of the tyrant. This violent reign was of short duration. Harthacanute died three years after his accession, in consequence of his excesses in drinking. This event took place at the marriage feast of a Danish nobleman at Lambeth, on June 8, 1042.

The English, on the death of Harthacanute, saw that a favourable opportunity had occurred for recovering their ancient independence and shaking off the Danish yoke, which was insufferably galling to a proud and spirited people.

Prince Edward was in Normandy at the time of his brother's death; but though the true English heir was the descendant of Edmund Ironside, the absence of that prince in Hungary appeared a sufficient reason for his exclusion. Delays might be dangerous; the occasion might not again present itself, and must be eagerly embraced before the Danes, now left in the island without a leader, had time to recover from the confusion into which the death of their king had thrown them.

But this concurrence of circumstances in favour of Edward might have failed of its effect, had his succession been opposed by Godwin, whose power, alliances, and abilities gave him great influence at all times, especially amidst those sudden opportunities which always attend a revolution of government, and of which advantage can be taken only by great promptitude. There were opposite reasons which divided men's hopes and fears with regard to Godwin's conduct. On the one hand, the credit of that nobleman lay chiefly in Wessex, which was almost entirely inhabited by English. It was therefore presumed that he would second the wishes of that people in restoring the English line, and in humbling the Danes, from whom he, as well as they, had reason to dread, as they had already felt, the most grievous oppression. On the other hand, there was strong reason for animosity between Edward and Godwin, on account of Alfred's murder, which the latter might deem so deep an offence that it could never, on account of subsequent merits, be sincerely pardoned. Nevertheless, in those turbulent days men's memories were short; a strong union of interests was sufficient to cause the temporary burial of past wrongs. At the Witena-gemot, which was summoned at Gillingham, every measure was taken for securing the election of Edward. The English were unanimous and zealous; the Danes, who were in favour of Canute's nephew, Sweyn, were divided and dispirited, and Godwin's eloquence easily won the day. Two years afterwards the friendship was cemented by a marriage between the king and Godwin's daughter, Edith. It was thought advisable also to depress the Danish element by exile and confiscation of property in several instances.

The new king also treated his mother, who had returned to England, not only with coldness, but some degree of severity, on account of her having neglected him in his adversity. He accused her of preferring her son by Canute to his brother and himself—which, when the characters of her first and second husbands are compared, appears by no means improbable. He stripped her of the great wealth she had amassed, and compelled her to live in seclusion at Winchester. The accusation of her having been a party to the murder of her son Alfred, and of her criminal intercourse with the Bishop of Winchester, from which she is said to have cleared herself by walking barefoot over nine red-hot ploughshares, must be regarded as tradition merely.

The English fondly believed that by the accession of Edward they had delivered themselves for ever from the dominion of foreigners, but they soon found out that they were in error; for the king, who had been educated at the court of his uncle in Normandy, had contracted so strong an affection for the natives of that country that his court was speedily filled by them. This partiality will be considered by no means an unnatural one, when it is remembered that the natives of that populous and wealthy state were far more polished than the comparatively rude, unlettered English, and that their culture was much superior. The example of the monarch had its influence; the courtiers imitated the Normans both in dress and manners. French became the language not only of the court, but of the law; even the Church felt its influence, Edward creating Robert of Jumièges (1044), and Ulf (1049), two Norman priests, respectively Bishops of London and Dorchester. In 1051 Robert was made Archbishop of Canterbury. Similar appointments were made in secular affairs, and the whole country was filled with a swarm of Norman strangers. All these changes gradually excited the jealousy of the English nation; although it may be justly doubted whether the most far-sighted amongst them foresaw that they were preparing the way for a fresh conquest of the country.

The natural result of this unwise partiality for foreigners was the growth of a strongly national party, and with it Earl Godwin was not slow to identify himself. By a process of deliberate family aggrandisement he had succeeded in making the influence of his house nearly paramount in England; and this was based not only on immense possessions and administrative authority, but on the great personal talents of himself and his sons, which were wedded to dispositions of a more than ordinarily ambitious nature. Their power was, indeed, most formidable. Godwin, as has been already mentioned, was Earl of Wessex; his eldest son, Sweyn, was Earl of a district partly in Wessex and partly in Mercia; his second son, Harold, was Earl of the East Angles; and his nephew, Beorn, was Earl of the Middle Angles, a district which included Bedfordshire and Lincolnshire.

It was inevitable that a trial of strength should occur between the two parties sooner or later, and the unruly conduct of Godwin's family was, unfortunately, by no means a source of credit to his cause. In 1046, Sweyn, his eldest son, carried off the Abbess of Leominster, and in consequence had to leave the kingdom, his possessions being divided between Harold and Beorn. After futile attempts to gain pardon and restitution, he decoyed Beorn on to one of his ships and foully murdered him. He was thereupon outlawed, but soon afterwards the king weakly allowed him to return, and his earldom was restored to him.

Meanwhile, the feeling of animosity between the Norman and English parties at court, and in the country generally, was becoming terribly strong. Robert of Jumièges lost no opportunity of setting the king against Earl Godwin, and the English people were very angry when they saw the Norman favourites beginning to build castles, as strongholds of oppression, over the face of the land. It was not long before this animosity broke into action. Eustace, Count of Boulogne, who had married Edward's sister, having paid a visit to the king, passed by Dover in his return. One of his train being refused entrance to a lodging which had been assigned him, attempted to make his way by force, and in the contest he wounded the master of the house. The inhabitants revenged this insult by the death of the stranger; the count and his train took arms, and murdered the wounded townsman; a tumult ensued; nearly twenty persons were killed on each side; and Eustace, being overpowered by numbers, was obliged to save his life by flight from the fury of the populace. He hurried immediately to court, and complained of the usage he had met with. The king entered zealously into the quarrel, and was highly displeased that a stranger of such distinction, whom he had invited over to his court, should, without any just cause, as he believed, have been exposed to such insult and danger. Edward felt so sensibly the insolence of his people that he gave orders to Godwin, in whose government Dover lay, to repair immediately to the place, and to punish the inhabitants for the crime; but Godwin, who desired rather to encourage than repress the popular discontents against foreigners, refused obedience, and endeavoured to throw the whole blame of the riot on the Count of Boulogne and his retinue; he declared also that no man in his earldom should be put to death without trial. Edward, touched in so sensible a point, saw the necessity of exerting the royal authority; and he threatened Godwin, if he persisted in his disobedience, to make him feel the utmost effects of his resentment.

THE RIOT AT DOVER. (*See p.* 69.)

The earl, perceiving a rupture to be unavoidable, and pleased to embark in a cause where it was likely he should be supported by his countrymen, made preparations for his own defence, or rather for an attack on Edward. He assembled a great army, and was approaching the king, who, on his side, had collected his Norman favourites about him at Gloucester. Edward applied for protection to Siward, Earl of Northumberland, and Leofric, Earl of Mercia, two powerful noblemen, whose jealousy of Godwin's greatness on the one hand, and their hatred of the Normans on the other, caused them to adopt a policy of watchful neutrality. They hastened to him with such of their followers as they could assemble on a sudden; and finding the danger of a collision much greater than they had at first apprehended, they issued orders for mustering all the forces within their respective governments, and for marching them without delay to the defence of the king's person and authority. Edward, meanwhile, endeavoured to gain time by negotiation; while Godwin, who thought the king entirely in his power, and was willing to save appearances, fell into the snare; and not perceiving that he ought to have no further reserve after he had proceeded so far, lost the favourable opportunity of rendering himself master of the government.

The English, though they had no idea of Edward's vigour and capacity, bore him much affection on account of his humanity, justice, and piety, as well as the long race of their native kings from whom he was descended; and they hastened from all quarters to defend him from the present danger. His army was now so considerable that he ventured to take the field; and, marching to London, he summoned the Witena-gemot to judge the rebellion of Godwin and his sons. These nobles, angry at being treated as criminals, demanded hostages for their safety, which were refused. Soon afterwards, finding themselves deserted by the majority of their adherents, they disbanded their remaining forces, and fled the country. Baldwin, Count of Flanders, gave shelter and protection to the earl and three of his sons, Sweyn, Gurth, and Tostig. Harold and Leofwine, two other brothers, took refuge in Ireland.

Godwin and his sons were outlawed in 1051, and shortly afterwards occurred a most important event, namely, the visit of Duke William of Normandy to England. He was the king's cousin, through the marriage of Ethelred and Emma of Normandy, and the two had been thrown together in their boyhood. It may fairly be conjectured that the absence of Godwin from England and the visit of William of Normandy were two events which were not unconnected, and that the latter was invited over at the instigation of the French party, in order to pave the way to his accession to the throne. In after days William based his claims to a great extent on the promise which he declared that Edward had made to him at this time. It is more than probable, therefore, that some such stipulation was made by the weak king, but it should be observed that it was perfectly unconstitutional and illegal, because the English monarchy being purely elective, and the election lying in the hands of the Witena-gemot, the sovereign of England had no power to bequeath the kingdom to any successor, whether he were Englishman or foreigner.

Godwin and his sons were hardly the men to submit supinely to banishment without making an attempt to regain the position from which they had been thrust through an unwise confidence in the impotence of their enemy. Diplomacy having been exhausted, they resolved to use force, and in 1052, Baldwin of Flanders allowed Godwin to fit out an expedition in his harbours, while Harold made a descent from Ireland. The first attempt failed; Harold made a descent upon the coast of Somersetshire, and fought a battle with the inhabitants, who opposed his landing for provisions, but failed to effect a junction with Godwin, who had to retreat before the royal fleet, which was stationed at Sandwich in greater numbers than his own.

The exile, however, appears to have been more politic and more clear-sighted than the king, who, satisfied with his success, and deeming his enemy completely crushed, disbanded his men and neglected his ships, whilst Godwin kept his in readiness. Deeming the time at last had come, he put to sea once more, and sailed for Portland, where he was joined by his son Harold, with his Irish contingent. Being now master of the sea, he sailed along the southern coast, plundering where he could obtain no ready gifts of provisions, and called upon his followers in those counties which owned his authority to take arms in his cause. The appeal was not made in vain; such numbers flocked to his standard that he entered the Thames, where he found the king ready to meet him with forty ships.

Edward, it is said, desired to fight, but could find no one to support him, so hated were his Norman favourites, and the national party was accordingly completely triumphant. Godwin and his sons were recalled and restored to their former positions, and the Normans, with a few exceptions, were driven from the land, although a few of the better ones were afterwards allowed to come back. Among the outlaws was Robert of Jumièges, and the vacant archbishopric of Canterbury was given to Stigand, the Bishop of Winchester, who had effected the reconciliation between the king and Earl Godwin. So the family of Godwin was once more established in England, with the exception of Sweyn, who, smitten with remorse for his sins, went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and died abroad.

Godwin's new tenure of power did not last long, for in 1053 he died. At Easter he was dining with the king, at Winchester, and fell down in a fit. The superstition of the times did not fail to discover in this sudden death the direct intervention of God, and stories were told how the Earl, on being accused by the king of the murder of Alfred, had impiously taken a morsel of bread from the table, and had desired that it might choke him if he had had a hand in that crime. No sooner had he swallowed it, ran the legend, than he fell backwards and died. The tale is obviously one that was published by Godwin's Norman opponents to blacken his memory; but, apart from its inherent improbabilities, it is one that might easily be circulated concerning anyone that had suddenly died at table. Godwin was sincerely lamented by the English, and with justice, for though he may have been ambitious, and have made the aggrandisement of his family the first object of his concerns, he was none the less a true patriot, and strove, at considerable personal sacrifice, for the welfare of his country. His influence, and that of his son Harold after him, for the time beat back the Norman influx and secured for the English a further brief span of independence from Norman aggression.

Godwin's place was taken by his son Harold, who succeeded him as Earl of Wessex. Being of a more courtly disposition than his father, Harold managed to keep on excellent terms with the king. At the same time, the earldom of East Anglia was not at once given to a member of the Godwin family, but to Ælfgar, the son of Leofric of Mercia, who seems to have been put forward by the weak king as in some sort a rival to Harold. In 1055, however, Ælfgar was outlawed, whether with or without justice it is impossible to say, and Harold was thus freed for the time being of a dangerous opponent. The earldom, moreover, was given to his brother Gurth.

The death of Siward, Earl of Northumberland, in 1055, opened the way still more to the ambition of Harold. Siward, besides his other merits, had added new honours to England by his successful conduct of an expedition against Scotland, where Macbeth was king. According to the well-known version of the story which Shakespeare has made immortal, Duncan, the former king, was a prince of gentle disposition, but possessed not the genius requisite for governing a country so turbulent, and so much infested by the intrigues and animosities of the great. Macbeth, a powerful nobleman, and nearly allied to the crown, not content with curbing the king's authority, carried still further his pestilent ambition. He put his sovereign to death, chased Malcolm Canmore, Duncan's son and heir, into England, and usurped the crown. It would appear, however, that the murder of Duncan is really a fiction, that he was killed while flying from a battle between the two parties, and that Macbeth, so far from being a tyrant, was really a very able and worthy ruler. Be that as it may, Siward, whose cousin was married to Duncan, undertook, by Edward's orders, the protection of this distressed family. He marched an army into Scotland; and having defeated and killed Macbeth in battle, he restored Malcolm to the throne of his ancestors. This service, added to his former connections with the royal family of Scotland, brought a great accession to the authority of Siward in the north; but as he had lost his eldest son, Osberne, in the action with Macbeth, it proved in the issue fatal to his family His second son, Waltheof, appeared, on his father's death, too young to be entrusted with the government of Northumberland; and Harold's influence obtained that earldom for his own brother, Tostig.

There are two circumstances related of Siward which discover his high sense of honour and his martial disposition. When intelligence was brought to him of his son Osberne's death, he was inconsolable, till he heard that the wound was received in the breast, and that he had behaved with great gallantry in the action. When he found his own death approaching, he ordered his servants to clothe him in a complete suit of armour; and sitting erect on the couch, with a spear in his hand, declared that in that posture, the only one worthy of a warrior, he would patiently await the fatal moment.

Harold now found his path to the throne obstructed only by the family of Leofric. In 1057, however, death removed Leofric, that great earl of whom we would fain know more; for, from the meagre information we are able to gather concerning him, he would appear to have been anxious to bring to a close the quarrels that distracted and weakened the nation. He and his wife, the Lady Godiva of legend, founded many churches and monasteries, of which the most important was the church at Coventry.

Ælfgar was still a source of uneasiness to Harold. On being outlawed, he made a compact with Griffith, the king of the Welsh, and the two agreed to invade England. Ralph the Norman, Edward's nephew, was disgracefully defeated by the enemy, who took possession of Hereford, but on the arrival of Harold at the head of the English they retired into Wales and made peace, Ælfgar being restored to his earldom for a few months, probably through the influence of his father, who was still alive at the time. Soon after the death of Leofric, Ælfgar was outlawed again, but, pursuing his former tactics, was made Earl of Mercia, succeeding his father, through the armed intervention of Griffith, whose daughter he married. During the brief remainder of his life he plays no prominent part in events, having probably discovered by painful experience that Harold was an antagonist whom it was dangerous to provoke. The power of the house of Godwin was completed by the formation of Essex and Kent into an earldom for Leofwine, Harold's remaining brother.

The influence obtained by Harold's strength of character over the amiable but feeble king was increased by their common sympathies. Both were of considerably higher culture than the average Englishman, and they both had leanings towards the superior civilisation of France, a country to which Harold had paid a visit. Moreover, both of them were genuinely pious men, and their piety took the outward form of the building and endowment of churches. The Confessor's chief edifice was the Abbey of Westminster, and parts of the building which still stands there are his work. Harold, in a kindred spirit, founded an abbey at Waltham in 1060, and established a college there, inviting learned men from the Continent to teach the scholars. Unlike Dunstan, he befriended the secular priests, but he was in every respect rigidly orthodox, and refusing to acknowledge Stigand, because he had been consecrated by the anti-Pope Benedict, caused the abbey at Waltham to be hallowed by the Archbishop of York.

Harold was not only pious, but a great warrior, and in 1063 he put a stop to the incursions of Griffith of Wales by completely conquering that country.

THE DEATH OF SIWARD. (*See p.* 71.)

TAKING SANCTUARY.

Despite the lesson they had previously received from Harold, the Welsh continued the terror of the West of England, which they systematically plundered, retreating with their booty to their mountain strongholds. Harold found he could do nothing more acceptable to the public, and more honourable to himself, than the suppressing of so dangerous an enemy. He formed the plan of an expedition against Wales; and having prepared some light-armed foot to pursue the natives into their fastnesses, some cavalry to scour the open country, and a squadron of ships to attack the sea-coast, he employed at once all these forces against the Welsh, prosecuted his advantages with vigour, made no intermission in his assaults, and at last reduced the enemy to such distress that, in order to prevent their total destruction, they made a sacrifice of their prince, whose head they cut off and sent to Harold; and they were content to receive as their sovereigns two brothers of Griffith appointed by Edward to rule over them. The new princes swore oaths to Harold and Edward, and thus the monarchy over united Wales came to an end, although the country was not annexed to England until long years afterwards.

Another prominent feature in Harold's character besides his valour, was his sense of justice, of which he gave very favourable indication in the year 1065, when his brother Tostig, the Earl of Northumberland, being of a violent, tyrannical temper, acted with such cruelty and injustice that the inhabitants rose in rebellion, and chased him from his government. Morcar and Edwin, two brothers, who were the sons of Ælfgar, Edwin the elder of the two having succeeded him in the earldom of Mercia, concurred in the insurrection; and the former, being elected earl, advanced with an army to oppose Harold, who was commissioned by the king to reduce and chastise the Northumbrians. Before the armies came to action, Morcar, well acquainted with the generous disposition of the English commander, endeavoured to justify his own conduct. This was a bold step, but the event fully proved the wisdom of adopting it. He represented to Harold that Tostig had behaved in a manner unworthy of the station to which he was advanced; that no one, not even a brother, could support such tyranny without participating in some degree in the infamy attending it; that the Northumbrians, accustomed to a legal administration, and regarding it as their birthright, were willing to submit to the king, but required a governor who would pay regard to their rights and privileges; that they had been taught by their ancestors that death was preferable to servitude, and had taken the field, determined to perish rather than suffer a renewal of the indignities to which they had long been exposed; and they trusted that Harold, on reflection, would not defend in another the violence he had repressed in his own government. This remonstrance, sustained as it was by the arguments that have just been summarised, was accompanied by such proofs of the justice of the complaints that Harold felt himself compelled to abandon his brother's cause; and, returning to Edward, persuaded the king to pardon the Northumbrians, and to confirm Morcar in the government. He afterwards married the sister of that nobleman. Tostig, in a rage, quitted England, and took refuge at Bruges with his father-in-law, Baldwin of Flanders.

But meanwhile the question of the succession to the throne was becoming daily more pressing. Edward was evidently rapidly sinking into the grave. He had never loved his wife, Harold's sister, and had no children by her. The natural choice of the Witena-gemot would have been Edward, the son of Edward's elder brother, who had been sent to Hungary by the King of Sweden. Accordingly, an embassy was sent to Hungary, and in 1057 the Atheling, or member of the royal line, arrived with his children, Edgar, Margaret, and Christina. But the prospect of his one day becoming King of England, which would have solved a most difficult problem, was speedily cut short by his death within a few days. Of the royal family, Edgar, his son, was now the only direct male representative, and he, as being a mere boy, was hardly a candidate on whom the choice of the Witena-gemot would fall. It should be observed that Harold appears to have placed no obstacle in the way of the advent of the members of the house of Cerdic to England, and throughout he seems honestly to have acted for the best.

To look upon the election of Harold to the throne as in any sense a usurpation is to import purely modern ideas about royalty into days when hereditary descent was never for a moment recognised as giving an indefeasible right. To pass over the members of the royal line was no doubt an unusual measure, because there were as a rule some members of that line who were fully competent to succeed, but, failing such a candidate, the Witena-gemot were quite within their right in electing any one whom they believed to combine the necessary qualities of valour and statesmanship. And of all men in England, it could hardly be doubted that Harold was pre-eminently the possessor of the attributes that went in those days to make a good king. He was therefore tacitly designated as Edward's successor by universal consent; but in William of Normandy he had a dangerous and unscrupulous opponent who would hesitate to use no means that force or fraud might throw in his way. One effective instrument he had already acquired during his visit to England, and chance speedily placed a second in his path, of which he availed himself with equal dexterity.

CHAPTER X.

THE NORMAN INVASION.

The Normans—Their Settlement in France—Their gradual Civilization—Richard the Good—Robert the Devil—William's earlier years—His Consolidation of Power—Harold's Adventures in Normandy and the Story of his Oath to William—Death and Character of Edward—Election of Harold—William's Claims—He obtains the Sanction of the Church—His Preparations—Proceedings of Tostig—Harold's Forces dwindle—Invasion of Tostig and Harold Hadrada—Battle of Stamford Bridge—Landing of William—Harold in London—Desertion of Edwin and Morcar—Negotiations—Harold at Senlac—Account of the Battle—Death of Harold and Discomfiture of the English—His Burial—Legend of his Escape.

BEFORE narrating Harold's adventures in Normandy, and the oath which he is said to have sworn to William there, it may be well to give an account of the rise of the formidable power of which William was now the ruler. The Normans, or Northmen, were, when they first come within the ken of history, bands of piratical adventurers, and were practically identical with the Danes, the term being loosely used for the inhabitants of what we now call the Scandinavian kingdoms of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. In the previous chapters, a description has been given of the invasions and settlements of these barbarians in England; but England was by no means the only country which they vexed by their depredations, and the northern coast of France afforded an equally suitable place of debarkation for their hordes.

Upon the French, as upon the English, the enemy at first contented themselves with inflicting yearly raids, without any intention of occupying the land; but in 912, Rollo the Ganger, or Walker, so called because he was too tall to ride, a leader after the stamp of Guthrum, seized from Charles the Simple, king of the West Franks—for France was not as yet a united kingdom—land on both sides of the Seine, with Rouen for its capital, and an arrangement was made between the two at Clair-sur-Epte, which has been compared to the treaty of Wedmore. By it Rollo promised to embrace Christianity, and to do homage to Charles. The well-known story has it that he was too proud to go through the ceremony, which consisted in kissing the king's feet, but deputed it to one of his soldiers, who, by raising the royal foot to his mouth, instead of stooping towards it, well-nigh upset his Frankish majesty. Despite his promise, Rollo speedily relapsed into heathendom, and, together with his son, William Longsword, proceeded to add to his territories. A large district passed into the hands of the Normans by conquest, including Avranches, Lisieux, and Caen.

It was some time before the Normans became French, but they were gradually assimilated to the people round them, even as the Danes had been in England. The change was accomplished in the reign of the third duke, Richard the Fearless (943—996), when the whole race embraced Christianity, and adopted the French language, Norse being the speech, however, of the people who dwelt round Bayeux. The Normans were a very receptive race, and wherever they wandered throughout Europe they adopted whatever customs were best in the people with whom they came in contact. They learned new modes of fighting; they acquired new weapons, the shield, the hauberk, the lance, and the long-bow; they became masterly horsemen. Further, they developed that impressive style of architecture which is still called by their name, and built churches and monasteries, important among which is the Abbey of Bec, whence came both Lanfranc and St. Anselm in aftertimes; they founded bishoprics. In a word, they transformed themselves with remarkable swiftness from a race of depredators into one of the most cultivated of the peoples of Europe. It was during the reign of Richard the Fearless that Hugh Capet, on the death of the last of the descendants of Charles the Great, founded the French monarchy by a process of conquest, and made Paris his capital. In this great achievement he would never have succeeded had it not been for the assistance of Richard, who was his brother-in-law. In return, the Duke of Normandy ceased to be called by his neighbours "Dux Piratarum" ("the Duke of the Pirates"), and became the loyal vassal of the King of the French. Normandy formed one of the noblest territories dependent on the Capetian dynasty, but its dukes took care that their liberties were in no degree infringed.

The next duke, Richard the Good, Ethelred's contemporary, has been already mentioned in this work (*see p.* 58). His reign is chiefly remarkable for the fact that in it we begin to hear of those noble families which afterwards played so great a part in English history. The marriage between Emma and Ethelred was the first link in the chain of events which led to the conquest of England, and it was at the Norman court that Edward the Confessor acquired his foreign sympathies. After a reign of about thirty years, Richard died in 1026.

On his death the kingdom was distributed between the rival brothers, Richard the Third and Robert. Richard, however, was regarded as duke during the two ensuing years, and on his death, in 1028, was succeeded by Robert. He is known to history as "the Devil," though it is very difficult to tell why, and after a somewhat brief reign he died, in 1035, on his way back from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

On the death of Robert, his son William was about eight years old; moreover, of illegitimate birth, his mother being the daughter of a tanner at Falaise. But Robert, before his departure, had caused his nobles to swear allegiance to William, and the law of hereditary descent was far more strictly regarded in France than in England. These facts, joined to the consideration that possible successors of the line of Rollo were not easily to be found, caused William's accession to be undisputed. Nevertheless, the period of his minority was one of much confusion, during which the boy-duke's life was in perpetual danger, and his position was the more precarious because the King of the French began to show signs of animosity towards the great semi-independent state to the north of his dominions. In 1047 William began to act for himself, and when an attempt was made by the nobles to wrest the western part of his dominions from him, he overthrew the rebels, with the grudgingly offered aid of Henry of France, at Val-ès-Dunes. After this crushing triumph, his power was secure. He surrounded himself with a splendid nobility, of whom William Fitz-Osbern and Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, his two half-brothers by his mother's marriage with Baldwin of Conteville, and Robert of Mortain, were to make themselves feared on the other side of the channel. The Church was munificently rewarded for its support, and among his most magnificent buildings was the Abbé aux Hommes at Caen. Not only

HAROLD TAKEN PRISONER BY THE COUNT OF PONTHIEU. (*See p.* 77.)

did he recover all the dominions that the Norman dukes had ever held, but he twice defeated the French king, Henry, when he invaded his dominions, and in 1063 made his great Continental acquisition in the conquest of Maine. Despite the Papal inhibition, he took to wife Matilda, the daughter of Count Baldwin of Flanders, in 1052, and endured the ban without much inconvenience until 1060. His visit to England, and the claim, worthless though it was, that he built upon it, have already been mentioned (*see p.* 70).

PEVENSEY CASTLE.

In the last years of the reign of the Confessor (the exact date is unknown) the hazard of fortune placed his rival, Harold, in his power for the time being, and he made excellent use of the opportunity.

One day Harold, while sailing in the channel, was driven by tempest on the territory of Guy, Count of Ponthieu, who, being informed of his quality, immediately detained him prisoner, and demanded an exorbitant sum for his ransom. Harold found means to convey intelligence of his situation to the Duke of Normandy; and represented that he had met with extremely harsh treatment from the mercenary disposition of the Count of Ponthieu, who was William's vassal.

William was immediately sensible of the importance of the incident: he foresaw that if he could once gain Harold, either by favours or menaces, his way to the throne of England would be open, and Edward would meet with no further obstacle in executing the favourable intentions which he had entertained on his behalf. He sent, therefore, a messenger to Guy, in order to demand the liberty of his prisoner; and that nobleman, not daring to refuse so great a prince, put Harold into the hands of the Norman, who conducted him to Rouen. William received him with every demonstration of respect and friendship; and even persuaded him to take part in a campaign which he was waging with Count Conan of Brittany, in which Harold highly distinguished himself, and was rewarded with the compliment of knighthood. In his anxiety to be allowed to return home, Harold appears to have compromised himself by taking some sort of oath, which William attempted to make additionally binding by a curious trick. He caused Harold, when he swore, to place his hand on a chest, and then, withdrawing the cover, showed the Englishman the relics of the saints, which had been collected from all parts of Normandy. This device is quite in keeping with the ideas of that time, and any breach of the engagement would have been considered a most wicked act of perjury, even though the taker of the oath was not aware of the solemnity of the promises he had made.

The terms of the oath are quite uncertain. Harold remained, so far as we know, absolutely silent on the subject, and his silence naturally conduces to the belief that he must have made some stipulations that he had no right to make. Professor Freeman strives hard to prove that he only promised to marry William's daughter, and that he did homage to him as his future father-in-law. The Norman chroniclers assert that he did homage to William as his future king, and promised in the meantime to deliver to him the castle of Dover, and to marry his daughter. It is hardly credible that Harold, though his position was a very difficult one, can have compromised himself in this manner; but it is possible that he may have thought that no price was too heavy to pay for freedom, and may have consoled himself by reflecting that to pledge himself to William as his future king was perfectly illegal, inasmuch as the election lay in the hands of the Witena-gemot. In any case, whatever understanding was concluded, Harold made no attempt on his return to carry it out, but continued in that line of conduct by which he accustomed the people of England to regard him as their future sovereign; and broke one of the conditions, at any rate, by marrying the daughter of Ælfgar, the widow of Griffith of Wales. He was so completely successful that the Confessor, on his death-bed (he died on January 5th, 1066) requested the Witena-gemot to choose Harold as his successor, and said nothing concerning William of Normandy, or any promises that had been made to him at the time of his visit to England.

Edward, to whom the Church has given the title of Saint and Confessor, was the last of the direct line of the West Saxon kings that ruled in England. Though his reign was peaceable and fortunate, he owed his prosperity less to his own abilities than to the conjunctures of the times. The Danes, employed in other enterprises, did not attempt those incursions which had been so troublesome to his predecessors, and fatal to some of them. The facility of his disposition made him acquiesce in the government of Godwin and his son Harold; and the abilities, as well as the power of these noblemen, enabled them, while they were entrusted with authority, to preserve domestic peace and tranquillity. The most commendable circumstance of Edward's government was his attention to the administration of justice; and he is said to have compiled, for that purpose, a body of laws, which he collected from the laws of Ethelbert, Ina, and Alfred. This compilation, if it ever existed, is now lost (for the laws that pass under Edward's name were composed afterwards), and it is thought that when we find the English in after-times asking for a renewal of King Edward's laws, they do not allude to any definite code, but simply to the old customs generally. But, while praising Edward for his rectitude of conduct, we ought not to forget that his weak dependence upon Norman favourites in the earlier part of the reign was the cause of infinite disaster to the nation in the years that followed his death. He was, in fact, as it has been often said, more fitted for a Norman cloister than for the English throne.

The election of Harold by the Witena-gemot was duly effected on the Feast of the Epiphany, the claims of the Atheling, Edgar, apparently not having been taken into serious consideration, so important was it felt to be that a capable man should have command in times when an invasion might be expected at any moment. William, as may be imagined, was not long in putting in his claim to the throne; and, having summoned Harold to fulfil the promises that he had made in Normandy (to which summons answer was returned that the promises were such as Harold could not possibly perform), he proceeded to set out a most ingenious statement of the rights which he asserted were his. They were absolutely worthless, but probably produced the desired effect on the Continent—an impression that William was the victim of fraud. In the first place, he based his claim to the crown on his descent; he was, he declared, Edward's next-of-kin through Edward's mother, Emma. This, of course, was not true, Edgar being considerably nearer in relationship; and even so, it would only entitle him to a certain amount of preference. Secondly, he declared that Edward had left him the crown, but such a bequeathal was, as we have seen, quite beyond the power of an English king, even if it was ever definitely made, of which no written proof was produced. Thirdly, he told the story of Harold's oath, which the latter had no right to take. Very few men among the English appear to have been won over by these specious arguments, but upon the Continent, and especially in France, where men were probably in ignorance of English customs, it is not improbable that they carried considerable weight, especially when backed by the authority of the Church. For William was careful to obtain this powerful sanction, and thereby he invested the invasion with the character of a war of religion.

To the shallow arguments about the perjury of Harold, he was cunning enough to add others of more solid worth, namely, that he would bring the Church of England more thoroughly under the control of Rome than it had hitherto been, and especially would cause the Papal dues to be more regularly paid. These last considerations could not but have much influence with the Pope, Alexander II., and William's envoys were fortunate to gain over the man who had the entire ascendency in the Papal counsels, the famous Hildebrand, who afterwards became Pope Gregory the Seventh. The Pope, therefore, announced his cordial sanction of the enterprise, and despatched to the Norman Duke a consecrated banner, and a ring containing some of St. Peter's hair.

William now set himself seriously to work to gain allies, and to get an army ready. He applied in the first instance to the King of France; but William was already too powerful a vassal, and his overtures were rejected from policy. Nothing daunted, he next addressed himself to his father-in-law, Count Baldwin of Flanders. Baldwin listened to him, and helped him to the utmost of his power. His own subjects were at first unwilling to take part in the undertaking, but William won them over by his cajoleries. By the middle of August, 1066, the Duke of Normandy had collected or built upwards of 900 large vessels, without counting those destined to serve as means of transport, and had under his command 50,000 horsemen and 10,000 foot soldiers. However, he did not hurry his preparations, for everything was turning out in his favour.

For William was not the only enemy against whom the unfortunate Harold had to contend. His unscrupulous and selfish brother, Tostig, also determined to make a dash for the crown, hopes of which he had entertained previously to his banishment, since he was a favourite with the Confessor, and the king had been very unwilling to part with him. Early in the year he applied for assistance to William, but the duke, although eager enough to profit by his folly, would give him no assistance. Thereupon, having collected some ships from the ports of Flanders, Tostig made a wild descent upon the south of England, and plundered the coast from the Isle of Wight to Sandwich. Driven away by the approach of Harold, he directed his forces to the Humber, but was beaten off by Edwin and Morcar, and forced to take refuge in Scotland.

All this while Harold had been watching the south coast, daily expecting to see the ships of William in the channel. But William never came, and the English churls were longing for their homes and harvests, so that the forces began to dwindle away. The English army, it should be remembered, was a militia, serving without pay and under compulsion. Such a force was particularly unwieldy, and particularly hard to keep together. At last, on September the 8th, the provisions failed, and Harold was compelled to disband his forces, leaving the southern coast bare.

Hardly had he done so, when he received tidings of a most formidable invasion of the north. The restless Tostig, undismayed by the utter miscarriage of his previous ventures, went in quest of allies to the courts of the North, and after an unsuccessful visit to the King of Sweden, obtained the powerful assistance of the King of Norway, Harold Hardrada, one of the greatest warriors of his time. The Norwegian king made his appearance with a powerful fleet at the mouth of the Tyne, and there Tostig joined him with the remnants of his former expedition.

They sailed some way up the Ouse, and then struck inland towards York, but at Fulford were met by the Earls Edwin and Morcar, at the head of a numerous host. The earls, however, were defeated with heavy loss, and the city of York, after a mutual exchange of hostages with the invaders, agreed to open its gates to receive Harold Hardrada as their king, and to join him in a war against Harold of England.

Harold Hardrada thereupon withdrew to Stamford Bridge, and it was there that Harold found him and the traitor Tostig. He had hastily gathered together an army consisting of his house-carls, thegns, and such men as could be collected on the spur of the moment, and advanced northwards by forced marches. On September the 25th he was in York, and, passing rapidly through it, fell upon the Northmen at Stamford Bridge, before they were aware that he was in the neighbourhood. The battle was fiercely contested, nevertheless, and though the Northmen, on the nearer side of the river Derwent, were driven into it and drowned, those on the farther side put themselves in battle array, and, by the time the English were over the bridge, were ready to meet them. After a tough contest, however, Harold

Hardrada and Tostig were slain, and the enemy completely dispersed. According to the spirited account of Henry of Huntingdon, there was a parley between the two hosts before the battle, in which Harold offered Northumberland to Tostig, but to Harold Hardrada "six feet of the ground of England, or perchance more, seeing that he is taller than other men." This version of the story is, however, rejected by Professor Freeman, because of its inaccuracies of detail, though the conversation is consistent with what we know of the characters of Harold and Tostig. Harold was no less humane than brave. Instead of putting to death Olaf, the son of Hardrada, and the other captives who had fallen into his hands, he allowed them to go in peace. William of Malmesbury also relates that he offended a portion of his army by refusing them a share of the plunder, and that many in consequence abandoned his standard.

WILLIAM I., SURNAMED THE CONQUEROR.

Had it not been for the impossibility of keeping the English host together, and for the absence of Harold in the north, it is difficult to see how William could ever have effected a landing. As it was, however, his course was perfectly unopposed upon the sea, and a landing was safely effected at Pevensey on September 29th, four days after the battle of Stamford Bridge. It is said that as William stepped on shore he fell, and rose with a morsel of earth in his hand, whereupon one of his followers happily remarked that he had taken *seisin* of the land. The investment, or *seisin*, in landed property was accomplished in those days by the lord presenting a clod of earth to his vassal, hence the remark was very pertinent.

From Pevensey, William marched to Hastings,

DEATH OF HAROLD AT THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS. (*See p.* 82.)

and ravaged the country for provisions, constructing at the same time a wooden fort as a secure basis of operations. Harold was at York when he received the intelligence of the landing of the Norman host, and he made hot haste to London, whence he issued a summons to all the men of England to come to his aid against the invader.

But in the supreme hour of the fortunes of the English kingdom, it was found that the old disunion which the kings of Wessex had in vain attempted to overcome, was still as potent a factor for evil as in the days of the Danish invasions. From Wessex, and from the earldoms of Harold's brothers, men readily came to defend the fatherland; but Edwin and Morcar, with a shortsightedness and ingratitude which are almost incredible, kept back the men of the North, under the expectation that William, if he overcame, would be content with Wessex and the South, and that so the house of Leofric would profit by the overthrow of the house of Godwin.

Harold abode in London for six days, gathering his host together, and entered into negotiations with Duke William. That there was any sincerity on either side may be doubted, and probably the first proposal, which was sent apparently by Harold, was only made to gain time. It is said that William was offered a sum of money to depart. To this William replied by a series of clever propositions, of which the first was that Harold should give up the kingdom in exchange for the earldom of Northumberland, an offer which, if made, shows that the Norman duke by no means felt the ground to be safe under his feet. Then he is related to have appealed to the mediation of the Pope, a tolerably safe proposal, considering his previous dealings with the Holy See. Lastly, he is said to have challenged Harold to single combat, an offer which the king likewise declined, on the ground that this was not a mere personal quarrel, but a matter in which the whole English nation was concerned.

By the end of six days, Harold had collected a considerable force, and determined to risk a battle, and a consideration which influenced him not a little was the difficulty of provisioning so large a host without causing annoyance to the people. Here, as on previous occasions in his career, Harold was actuated by motives of humanity; but it may be doubted whether it would not have been wise to wait for more levies, and then overwhelm the Normans, who, man for man, were far better warriors than the English, by sheer numbers. He advanced, however, southwards, and halted on a hill called Senlac, to the north-west of Hastings.

The position was a very strong one, and Harold, with great military skill, fortified it with a palisade, thereby making a most formidable barrier against the Norman cavalry. The battle of Senlac, or Hastings, as it is popularly called, was fought on the 14th of October, and the evening before it was spent, it is said, by the Normans in prayer, and by the English in drinking and the singing of songs.

The battle began about nine o'clock. The English host was marshalled behind the palisade, all on foot, for they, unlike the Normans, were never fond of fighting on horseback, and Harold, with his brothers Gurth and Leofwine, stood under the royal standard. Against them the Normans advanced in three divisions, of which William commanded the centre. On the left was Alan of Brittany, with a force of Bretons, and troops from Maine and Poitou; on the right was Roger of Montgomery, at the head of the mercenary troops, whom William had hired from wherever they could be collected. The first attack failed completely, and the Normans, after a vain attempt to break down the palisade, were driven back in confusion, the Bretons being the first to fly. Unfortunately, in their excitement, some of the English soldiers pursued beyond the palisade, and were easily cut down in the plain. In the second attack, William of Normandy was unhorsed by Earl Gurth, but went against him on foot and cut him down; about the same time Leofwine was also slain.

Still, the English barrier was intact, and it seemed as if the Normans must withdraw in discomfiture. But William's generalship was equal to the occasion. He had seen how helpless the English were upon the open plain, and he resolved, therefore, to lure them from behind their defences by a feigned flight. The ruse was successful, and a considerable portion of the English army suffered for disobedience of Harold's orders by being compelled to make their escape as best they could to the broken ground to the back of the hill.

Still Harold fought on, and as evening was coming on, it seemed as if he might even yet be able to hold the field. Then William bethought him of another plan, and ordered his archers to shoot into the air, whereby the English were seriously incommoded. One of the falling shafts pierced Harold through the eye, and he was mortally wounded. The battle was to all intents ended when he died; his house-carls were killed at their posts, the light-armed troops fled into the rocks and swamps, inflicting severe losses upon such of their enemies as ventured to pursue them.

Thus did William of Normandy win the great battle of Hastings, which lasted from sunrise to sunset, and which, for the valour displayed by both armies and their leaders, was worthy to decide a contest for a crown. William, in the course of the battle, had three horses killed under him, and lost nearly fifteen thousand men; the loss of the English was probably considerably more.

William, at the height of his success, gave orders for the whole army to fall on their knees, and return God thanks for so signal a victory; after which he caused his tent to be pitched on the field of battle, and spent the residue of the night among the slain. Not less perhaps in gratitude for the past, than in the hope that such a work would procure him heavenly favour for the future, he solemnly vowed that he would erect a splendid abbey on the scene of this his first victory; and when this vow was accomplished, the altar of the abbey church stood on the spot where the standard of Harold had been planted. The holy house thus founded was called Battle Abbey.

On the morrow, he ordered his own dead to be buried, and gave the English peasants leave to do the same office for the others; but William refused to give up Harold's body to his mother, Gytha. An ancient manuscript in the Cottonian library, apparently written at Waltham Abbey about a hundred years after the battle, relates that two monks were deputed by William to search for the body of the king. Unable to distinguish it among the nameless dead by which it was surrounded, they sent for Harold's mistress, Edith, called "The Swan-necked," whose eye of affection was not to be deceived. It was buried under a heap of stones, whence William afterwards permitted it to be removed to Waltham.

There is a story related by Giraldus Cambrensis, that Harold, after receiving his wound, escaped from the field, and lived several years an anchorite in a cell near St. John's Church, in Chester. This account is, however, in the highest degree improbable, and there is no reason to doubt that the last of the Saxon kings died a soldier's death on the field of Hastings.

CHAPTER XI.

ENGLISH AND NORMAN ARCHITECTURE AND CUSTOMS.

Saxon Architecture; Theories about it—Documentary Evidence—Ancient Churches—Characters of the Saxon Style—Illustrations from an Anglo-Saxon Calendar—Old Manuscripts—English Scholarship—Music and the Minstrels—Musical Instruments—Games and Sports—Costume—The Table—Household Furniture—Material Condition of the People—Norman Costumes—Condition of Learning and the Arts—Refinement of the Normans—The Bayeux Tapestry.

FEW subjects in mediæval art have led to so much controversy as that of English architecture; one party of writers claiming for it a place as a distinct and separate style, and another totally denying its very existence.

It was usual for writers on architecture before Rickman's time to denominate all buildings in which the semicircular arch or the zigzag moulding prevailed as "Saxon," no matter how highly finished or how richly carved they might be; and, consequently, all our fine Norman churches are in their works described as Saxon.

When this designation was proved to be incorrect, a reaction took place, and some of our writers went so far as to deny the existence of any building of a date anterior to the Conquest. It was argued by these writers that the English built with wood only, and that, consequently, all their erections had long since perished. But though it is true there is evidence to show that the usual material for building was wood, and that it was sometimes overlaid with lead and other metals, yet we find, on the other hand, in the works of early writers, indubitable proofs to show that stone was also used, particularly in rebuilding the churches and monasteries which had been destroyed by the Danes. Alfred set aside a sixth part of his income for this purpose, and we are told by Asser that "he built the houses majestic and good, beyond all the precedents of his ancestors, by his new mechanical contrivances."

It was first pointed out by Rickman that

THE GATEWAY, BATTLE ABBEY.

there were a number of churches in different parts of the kingdom which could be proved to be of very early date, while they did not agree in character either with the Roman remains, or with the earliest of the Norman churches; and that, in some instances, early Norman work had been built upon portions of these early buildings, thus affording conclusive evidence that these edifices must be of a prior date to that of the earliest Norman buildings.

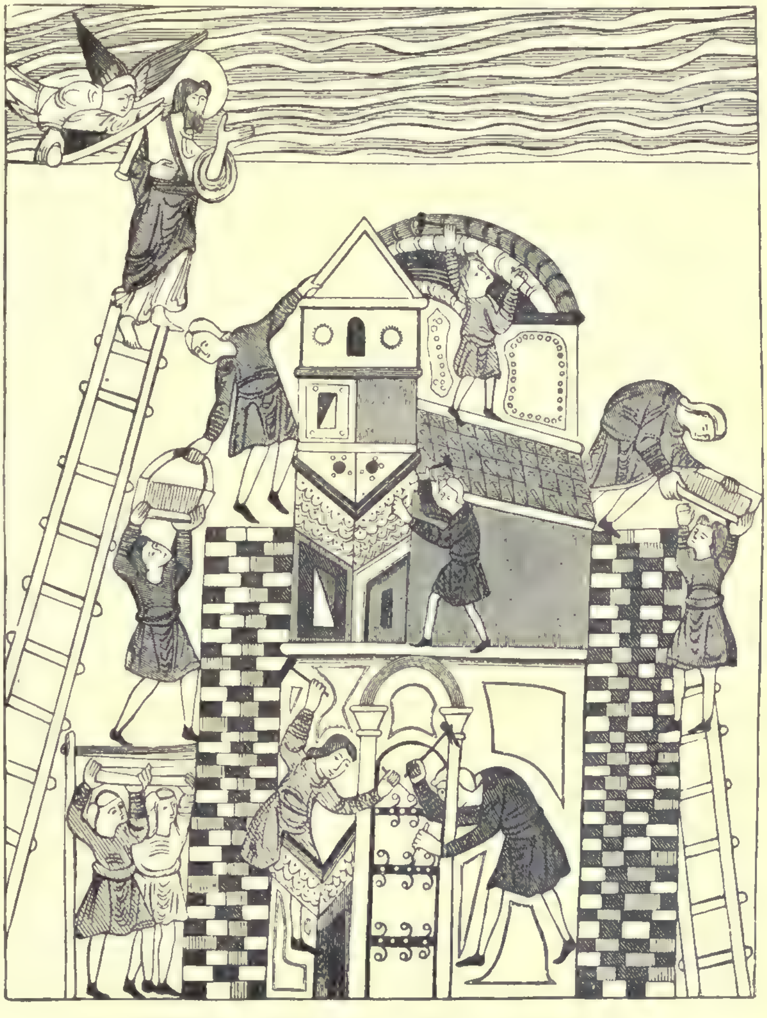
Strong confirmatory evidence is also offered when we find it stated, in a contemporary manuscript, that a church was built on a certain spot by some well-known ecclesiastic at a given time, and still find standing on this spot a building, or portions of a building, of a style which cannot be referred to that of any subsequent period. We are justified in considering this the building so mentioned; and when we find all these buildings agreeing in certain general features, we are also justified in considering these as constituting the style of the period.

Of this documentary evidence, the following are examples. The venerable Bede, mentions the building of a monastery at Jarrow by Benedict Biscop in 681, and we now find standing on the spot a church, of which the chancel is of the rudest construction, and evidently of earlier date than the tower, which, from its style, cannot be much subsequent to the Conquest, and in which portions of the earlier building are built into the walls. The east window is of later date, but the side windows of the church (now blocked up) are of the rudest possible construction—round-headed, with the heads formed of a single stone. These are undoubtedly the work of Benedict.

The church of Monkwearmouth is also mentioned by Bede as having been built by the same Benedict, in 676. This church still stands, and bears indubitable proofs of its early date. The windows are divided by balusters, and have other features peculiar to the period.

A convent existed at Repton, in Derbyshire, in the seventh century, and was destroyed by the Danes in 875. The church was afterwards rebuilt, and such portions as had not perished were built into the new erection, and they may still be distinguished by the peculiarities of their style. The original crypt under the church still remains in a tolerably perfect state, and is a very remarkable specimen of the style.

Curious crypts of this date also exist under the Cathedral of Ripon, and at Hexham. The latter is particularly interesting, from its having been constructed of materials taken from the Roman road, which passes within a short distance of the place, and Roman inscribed slabs have been used in forming its roof.



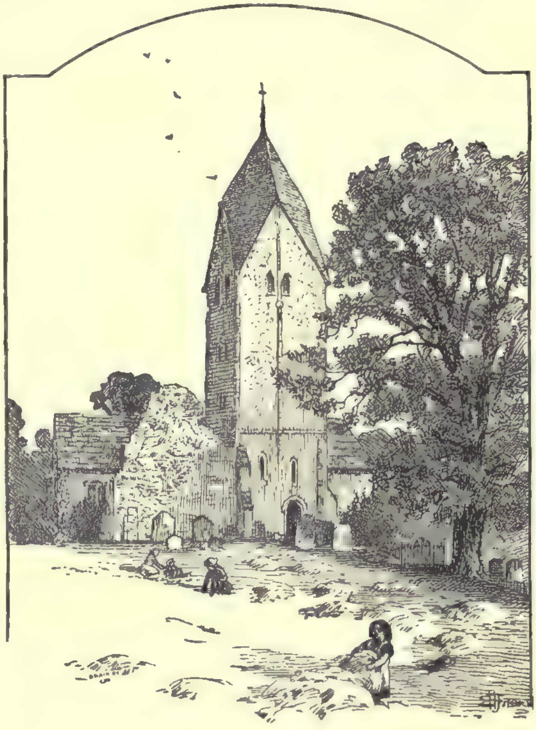
BUILDING OF THE TOWER OF BABEL. *(From a Saxon MS.)*

In the Old English MSS. in the British Museum and the library of Salisbury Cathedral, and particularly in the paraphrase of Cædmon, in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, buildings of stone are distinctly shown in the illuminations, and these buildings exhibit "the long and short work" and other distinctive features of existing remains. This, therefore, may be taken as conclusive evidence that these buildings are of English origin.

The characteristics of this style are as follow :—

Towers.—These are without buttresses, generally of the same dimensions from the foundation to the top, but sometimes diminishing by stages. They are usually built of rubble, the stones being very irregular in size, with quoins at the angles, which are formed of long stones set perpendicularly, and shorter ones laid horizontally alternately with them. This is termed "long and short work." They are sometimes divided into stages, and the surface is intersected by upright projecting ribs of stone, as if the builder had before him for a model a tower constructed of timber and plaster, and had endeavoured to imitate this in stone. The finest example which we have of this kind of ornament is the tower of Earl's Barton Church, Northamptonshire; other examples also occur at Barton-on-Humber, and at Barnack.

These towers seem always to have been coated with plaster between the ribs of stone, and this gives them a still more timber-like appearance.

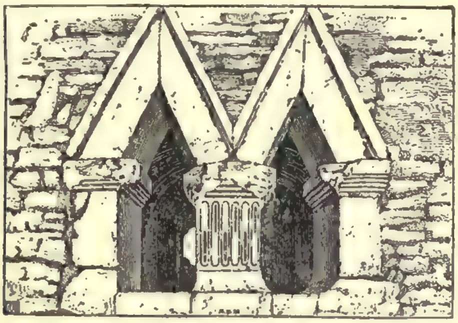

TOWER OF SOMPTING CHURCH.

Some towers have not this ornament, and are quite plain. The kind of masonry called "herring-bone" is frequently used, and Roman bricks taken from the ruins of earlier buildings are of frequent occurrence.

The upper portion of these Saxon towers has been destroyed, and replaced by later parapets; so that it is not easy to say in what manner they terminated. But the very remarkable tower of Sompting, in Sussex, offers a valuable solution of the difficulty. In this tower each side terminates in an acutely pointed gable, from which the roof is carried up, and, meeting in a point, forms a sort of short square spire, such as we still see in some of the churches in Germany. All these towers are without staircases, the different storeys being only to be reached by ladders. The circular or newel stair turret seems not to have been introduced till the twelfth century.

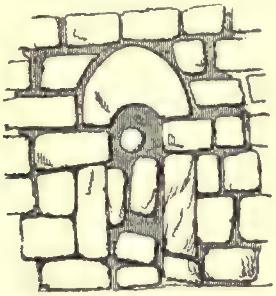
Windows.—These are either round-headed or triangular-headed, and are frequently surrounded by a sort of framework of projecting stone. They are usually—but not always—deeply recessed on the outside as well as in the inside, the narrowest part of the window being in the centre of the wall. When the window is of two lights, it is divided by a small baluster or shaft, set in the middle of the wall; this supports an impost, which is generally one stone reaching through the entire thickness of the wall. Sometimes the heads of both single- and double-light windows, instead of being arched, are made of two straight stones, meeting at the point, and forming a triangular head. The single lights are often little more than mere openings in the wall, frequently without ornament of any kind, the whole window being cut out of a single stone, as at Caversfield, and the jambs are often inclined, making the opening wider at the bottom than at the top. Ornament is seldom attempted, but at Deerhurst the shaft and jambs are adorned with a rude kind of fluting, and the imposts are cut into a series of simple square-edged mouldings. Roman bricks are sometimes used both for the jambs and for turning the arch, as at Brixworth. All these varieties of windows are very characteristic, and are not to be found in the later styles.

Doorways.—These, like the windows, are either round- or triangular-headed. The arches are generally turned of plain stones, without any moulding or ornament whatever—sometimes simple, and sometimes recessed; but the projecting framework of plain stone is not unfrequent, as may be seen at Earl's Barton, Stanton Lacy, &c. The imposts are as a rule plain, but sometimes ornamented with a series of singular mouldings, usually square-edged and plain, as at Barnack, or with a kind of fluting, as at Earl's Barton. At Sompting it is ornamented with a kind of scroll-work, though sculpture is seldom attempted. A cross is sometimes introduced above the door, as at Stanton Lacy, and it is remarkable that whenever the cross is used it is of the Greek form—that is, with the limbs of equal length in contradistinction to the Latin type, in which the lower member is the longest. The triangular heads of the doorways are formed either by two stones placed diagonally, and resting one upon the other, or partly by horizontal stones cut obliquely. Both these varieties may be seen at Barnack. Doorways are also sometimes built of tiles, taken from Roman buildings, as at Brixworth.



WINDOW (SAXON) OF DEERHURST CHURCH, GLOUCESTER.
(From a Photograph by F. R. Turner, Tewkesbury.)

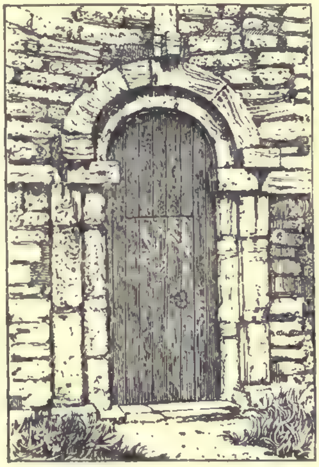
Mouldings and Sculptures.—There are very few mouldings belonging to this style, the strings and other members being mostly square-edged and plain, though, as at Dunham Magna, they are sometimes alternately notched on the edges. The capitals and bases of the shafts and balusters, which divide the windows, are moulded chiefly with round and square moulding. The sculptures are few, and very rude, as at St. Benet's, Cambridge, where two lions are sculptured at the spring of the tower arch.



WINDOW (SAXON) OF JARROW CHURCH, DURHAM.

Capitals.—The abacus seems in all cases to be a plain, square-edged, flat member, without chamfer (in which it differs from the Norman). The bell of the capital is either globular, as at Jarrow, or moulded, as before mentioned, or cut into a rude imitation of foliage, or of the Corinthian volute, as at Sompting.

It is curious to observe the evident imitation of Roman work in these capitals. The beautiful capital of the Corinthian order appears to have attracted the attention of the rude English workman, and his first attempt at sculpture seems to have been to copy it. Its delicate and complicated foliage was too difficult for his hand, but he could make an imitation of its more prominent feature, the volute. This partiality for the volute was continued in the next century, through the early and late Norman, until, in the transition to the Early English, it produced those magnificent capitals of which we have a few examples in England, and so many on the Continent.

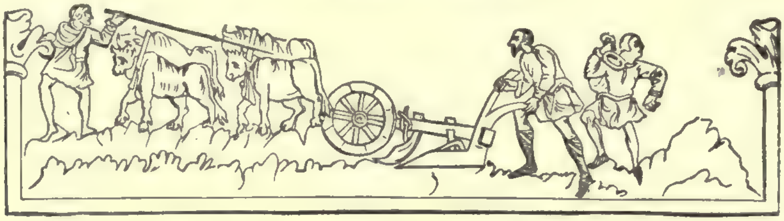


DOORWAY (SAXON) OF BARNACK CHURCH, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

It must not be expected that all these peculiarities will be found in one building; but wherever any of them occur, there is reasonable presumption that the building is of early date and deserving of further investigation.

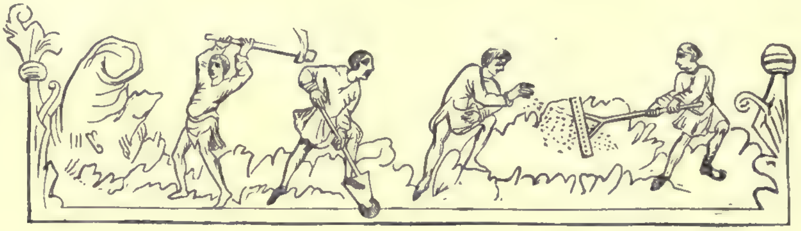
Illustrations drawn from ancient calendars are among the best documents one can consult for obtaining a knowledge of former manners and customs. The twelve designs which follow, and which may conveniently serve as an introduction to an account of English customs, are taken from an Anglo-Saxon calendar composed some time before the Norman Conquest, and preserved in the Cottonian Library. Some explanatory notes are added.

Anglo-Saxon Calendar.



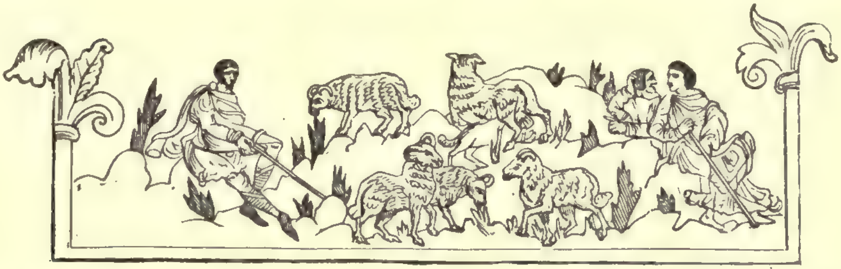
JANUARY.—The heathen English called this month "Wolf-monath," because the wolves were then most ravenous. It was also called "Aefter-Yula," that is, After-Christmas. In the woodcut, four oxen are laboriously drawing the plough. At that time they did not use horses for field labour; and oxen are employed, even at the present day, in some localities.

FEBRUARY.—Here they are cutting down trees for firewood. The English called February "Sprout-kele." Kele meant "kelewurt," and was most extensively used at this time for making broth. The well-known custom of making pancakes on Shrove Tuesday is a remnant of an old superstition, and certainly one of the most pleasing that has come down to us.

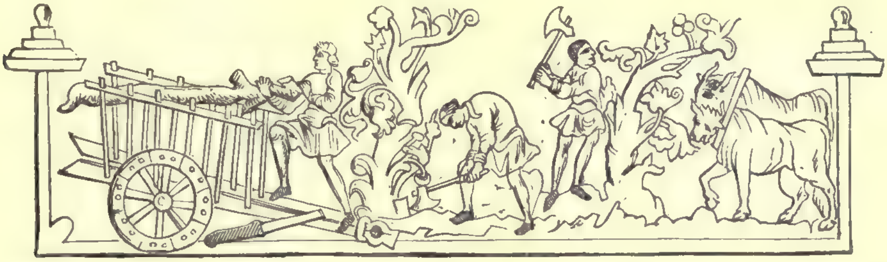


MARCH was dedicated by the English to the goddess Rhoeda, and hence called "Rhede-monath." It was called also "Illyd-monath," or the stormy-month. In the woodcut they are digging, hoeing, and sowing with much ardour. After the introduction of Christianity, March was held in great reverence, as the month in which Lent began.

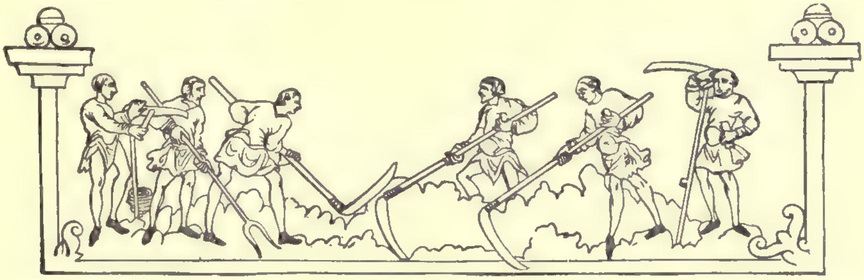
APRIL was "Oster-monath," because the wind generally blew from the east during this month. The woodcut appears to represent three thegns celebrating a feast by quaffing ale from their drinking-horns. On the right is an armed guard with a long spear, and on the left are two servitors. The bench on which the three worthy thegns are seated is adorned with two sculptures of formidable-looking animals. The use of chairs or sofas was then entirely unknown. They called the benches placed in the festal halls "mede benc," or "eale benc"—mead or ale benches.



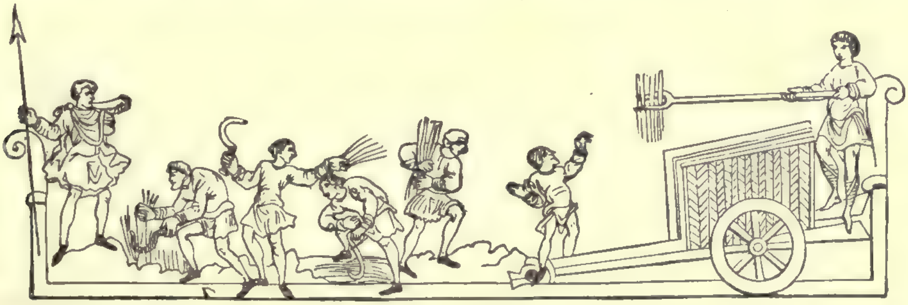
May was called "Trimilki," because then they began to milk the kine three times in the day. In this woodcut shepherds are watching over the ewes and lambs. May-day was the great rural festival of the English, and was celebrated with pomp and rejoicing. This festival will soon be numbered amongst the things that were.



June.—To June different names were given: "Weyd-monath," according to some, "because then the cattle began to weyd"—that is, feed in the meadows, which at that time were usually marshes. According to others, it was called "Midsummer month." This was the time of the year at which the English commenced their long voyages, and they are represented in the woodcut in the act of cutting down and dressing trees, in order to fit out their ships.

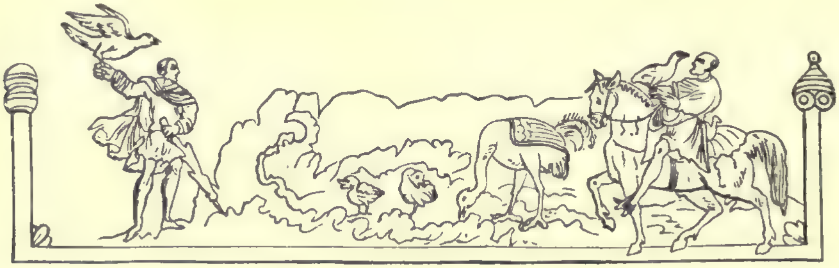


July was called by the English "Heu-monath," or foliage-month; also "Hey-monath," or hay-month, being the month in which they mowed and made hay, in which operations they are represented in the woodcut as being engaged. They also called it "Lida-aftera." meaning the second lida, or second month after the sun's descent.

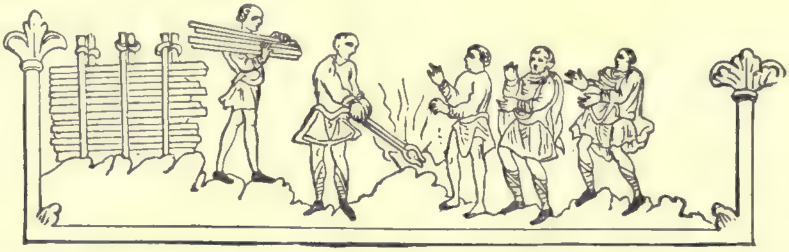


August was by the English called "Arn-monath," or "Barn-monath," meaning harvest-month. The instruments which appear in the woodcut do not seem to differ much from those used at the present day. To the left appears a man sounding a horn, with a spear in his right hand. Whether he is superintending the labourers, or is one of a hunting party entering the field, it is hard to decide. The sheaves are being lifted by a fork into a cart, or wagon, of tolerably good construction.

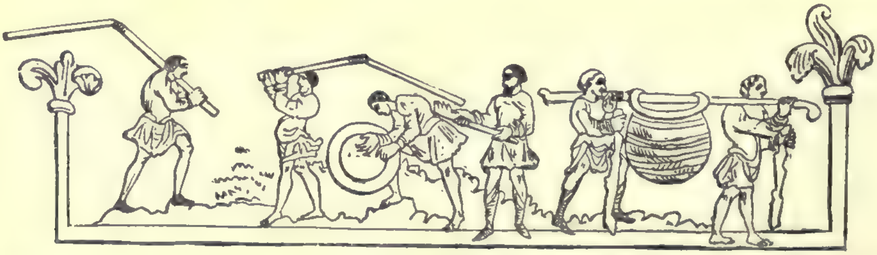
September was called "Gerst-monath"—barley-month; so named from the liquor called "beerlegh" made in that month, and hence "barley." The subject of the woodcut is a boar-hunt.



October was called the "Cold-monath," or "Wyn-monath"—wine-month. The vine was extensively cultivated in England in olden times. The woodcut represents a hawking scene.



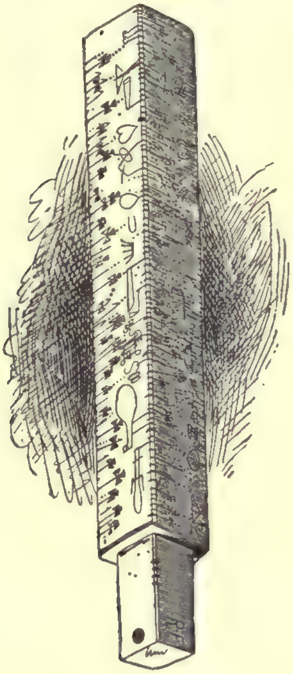
November was called "Wint-monath," or wind-month, as this was the season of the year when the cold storms commenced, which were generally considered to last till March. It was the custom to light great fires in the open air in honour of the gods, and as a means of driving away evil spirits. The men are here seen approaching one of these fires to warm themselves.



December was called "Aerra Geola," because the sun then "turns his glorious course;" and after the introduction of Christianity, "Heilig-monath," or holy-month. December was, among the English, above all things, a month of festivity. Before the introduction of Christianity, Christmas was the feast of Thor, and the wassail bowl circulated as briskly in honour of the heathen god as it has done since at the Christian festival. The figures in the woodcut are engaged in threshing the corn, winnowing it with a fan, and carrying it away.

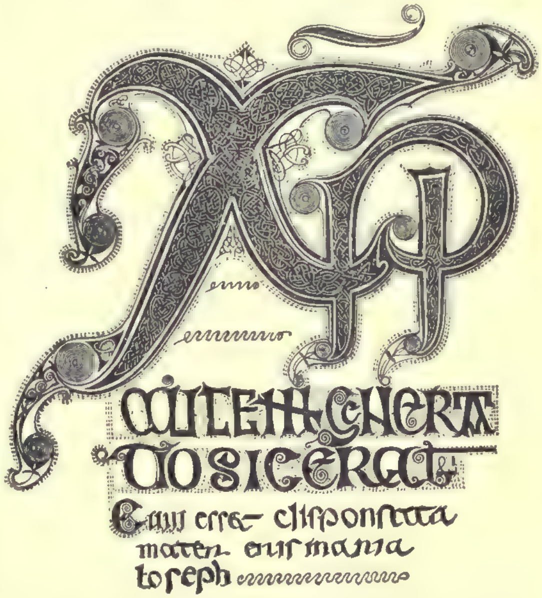
The foregoing designs afford, probably, as good an idea as can now be obtained of the occupations and amusements of our English forefathers, and of their daily life in time of peace.

The monasteries were the schools of the Middle Ages, in which all secular knowledge, as well as religious doctrine, was cultivated. Previous to the invention of printing, books were transcribed with great pains and labour. Not only was the mere task of copying a book by hand a work of considerable time, but the illuminations or embellishments with which the more valuable manuscripts were adorned, were executed with a degree of care and finish demanding infinite skill and industry. The annexed engravings are copied with scrupulous fidelity from various MSS. still extant, and serve to show some of the different kinds of writing which are found in those documents. Many of the MSS. also contain on each page paintings representing scenes either connected with the narrative in the text or otherwise. Sometimes they are ornamented with portraits of saints, kings, or other great men. These figures, as well as the other ornamental portions of the work, are brilliantly coloured, and are often represented on a gold ground.



SAXON CALENDAR.

The parchment used was of various kinds; that which was the finest and whitest being employed for the most valuable manuscripts. For gilding upon parchment, our ancestors employed both gold powder and leaf gold, which was fixed upon a white embossment, generally supposed to be a calcareous preparation. The subjects of the paintings were taken from sacred or profane history, but the artist invariably represented the costume and customs of his own time, and to these illuminations we owe most of the knowledge we possess of those customs. The English displayed proficiency in this branch of painting at an early period; and though it is not easy to trace the rise and progress of the art, there is evidence of its flourishing condition from the eighth to the eleventh centuries, in the numerous manuscripts of that date, which fortunately still remain both in England and in the collections on the Continent.



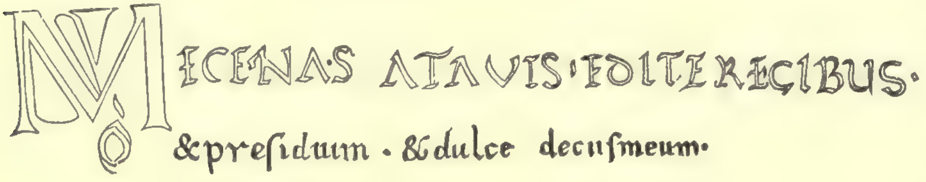
FRAGMENT OF COPY OF THE EVANGELISTS, IN LATIN.

(English MS. of the Tenth Century, with Illuminated Initial Letter, in the National Library, Paris.)

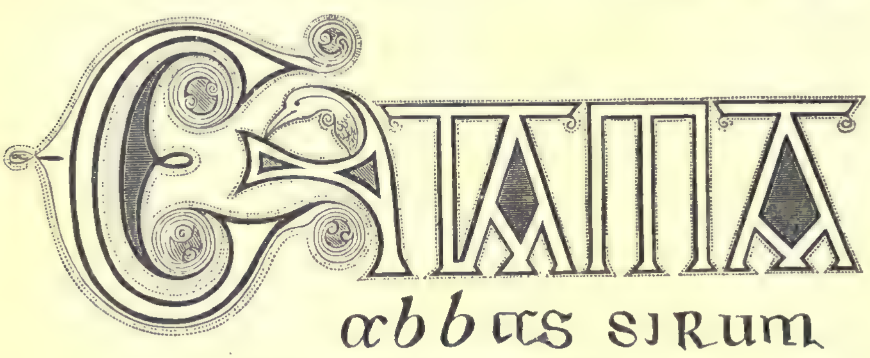
[Reduced to half the original size.]

Previous to the introduction of Christianity, the English possessed no literature worthy of the name. It is not, however, to be supposed that the people were destitute of intellectual power; for when our forefathers began to apply themselves to the pursuit of knowledge, the progress of literature was remarkably rapid. Within one hundred years after the light of knowledge dawned upon the English, Bede appeared, with other men, whose abilities and teaching exerted a marked influence upon the spread of English learning.

The English scholars, though defective in actual knowledge, had just conceptions of the objects of philosophy. Alcuin defines it to be the study of natural things, and the knowledge of divine and human affairs. All the subjects comprised by Alcuin in physics are arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. That larger field of science to which we now give the name of physics had not yet been discovered, nor had chemistry, mineralogy, and the other analogous sciences.


MECENAS ATAVIS EDITE REGIBUS·
&presidium · & dulce decus meum·

FIRST TWO LINES OF HORACE'S ODE TO MÆCENAS.
(From MS. of Horace's Works of the Tenth Century in the National Library, Paris.)



ENGLISH WRITING OF THE SIXTH CENTURY.

A fair idea of the condition of mental and moral science previous to the Norman conquest, may be obtained from an extant dialogue between Alcuin and Pepin, the son of Charles the Great. Some of the questions, with the answers, are subjoined:—

"What is life?—The gladness of the blessed; the sorrow of the wretched; the expectation of death.

"What is death?—The inevitable event; the uncertain pilgrimage; the tears of the living; the confirmation of our testament; the thief of man.

"What is sleep?—The image of death.

"What is man's liberty?—Innocence.

"What is the brain?—The preserver of the memory.

"What is the sun?—The splendour of the world; the beauty of heaven; the honour of day; the distributor of the hours.

"What is the moon?—The eye of night; the giver of dew; the prophetess of the weather.

"What is rain?—The earth's conception; the mother of corn.

"What is the earth?—The nurse of the living; the storehouse of life; the devourer of all things.

"What is the sea?—The path of audacity; the divider of regions; the fountain of showers.

"What is a ship?—A wandering house; a perpetual inn; a traveller without footsteps.

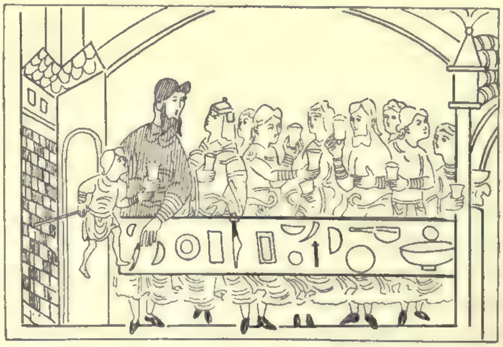
"What makes bitter things sweet?—Hunger.

"What makes men never weary?—Gain.

"What gives sleep to the watching?—Hope.

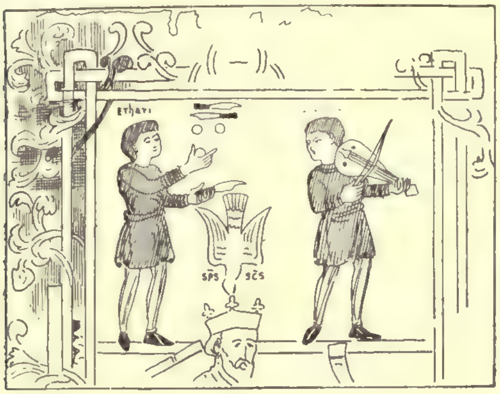
"Who is he that will rise higher if you take away his head?—Look in your bed, and you will find him there."

The following account, taken from William of Malmesbury, of the social condition of the English people at the time of the Conquest, indicates a decline of literature and the arts at that period. The picture may probably be overdrawn, but the main facts are correct. "In process of time, the desire after literature and religion had decayed, for several years before the arrival of the Normans. The clergy, contented with a very slight degree of learning, could scarcely stammer out the words of the sacraments, and a person who understood

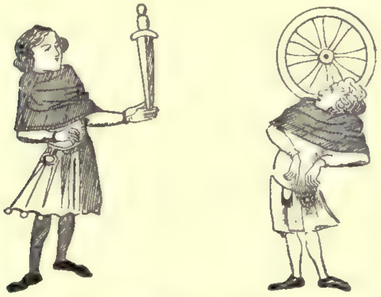


ENGLISH DINNER PARTY. *(From Cotton MS., Claud., B. 4.)*

grammar was an object of wonder and astonishment. The nobility were given up to luxury and wantonness. The commonalty, left unprotected, became a prey to the most powerful, who amassed fortunes, either by seizing on their property or by selling their persons into foreign countries; although it be an innate quality of this people to be more inclined to revelling than to the accumulation of wealth. Drinking was a universal practice, in which they passed entire nights, as well as days. They consumed their substance in mean and despicable houses, unlike the Normans and French, who, in noble and splendid mansions, lived with frugality."



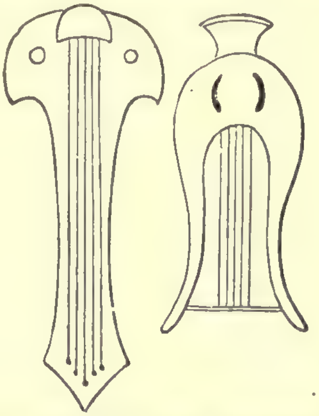
GLEEMEN JUGGLING. (*From the Cotton MS., Tib. C 6*)



BALANCING. (*From MS. in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.*)

Music was cultivated by our ancestors from a very remote period. Among the English the music on which most attention was bestowed was that employed in the services of religion. Singing in churches is said to have been introduced into England in the fourth century.

Among the northern nations the Scalds were at once the poets and musicians. Like the bards of the Britons, they celebrated the deeds of the great and brave in heroic poems, which were sung to the sounds of the lyre or the harp. After the conquest of Britain by the English, these minstrels remained in high favour among the people, and were received with respect and veneration in the courts of kings and the halls of the nobles. In the English language they were known by two appellations, the one equivalent to the English word gleemen, or merry-makers, and the other harpers, derived from the instrument on which they usually played.

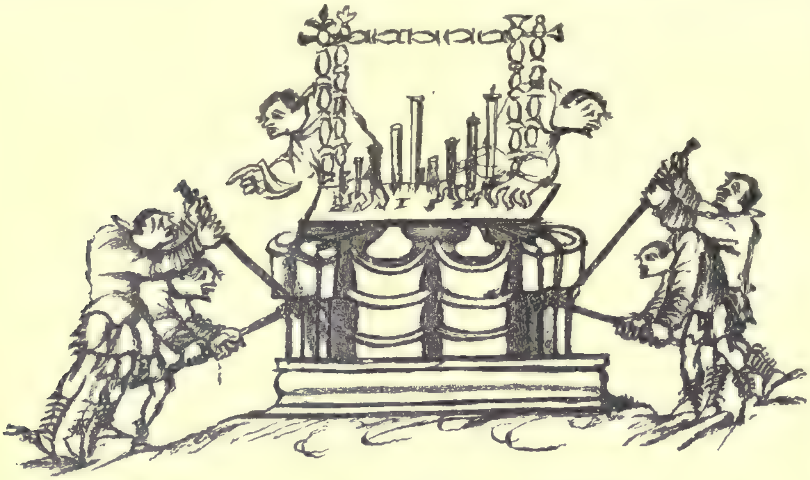


MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS. (*From the Caedmon MS., Oxford.*)

The gleemen were jugglers and pantomimists, as well as minstrels, and they were accustomed to associate themselves in companies, and amuse the spectators with feats of strength and agility, dancing, and sleight-of-hand tricks.

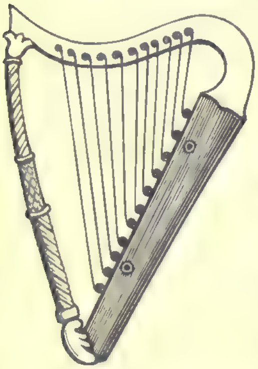
DANCE WITH LYRE AND DOUBLE FLUTE.
(*From "The Psychomachia," or "Battle of the Soul," of Aurelius Prudentius, MS. of Eleventh Century.*)

Among the minstrels who came into England with William the Conqueror was one named Taillefer, of whom it is related that he was present at the battle of Hastings, and took his place at the head of the Norman army, inspiriting the soldiers by his songs. Before the battle commenced he advanced on horseback towards the English lines, and casting his spear three times into the air, he caught it each time by the iron head and threw it among his enemies, one of whom he wounded. He then drew his sword and threw it into the air, catching it, as he had done the spear, with such dexterity, that the English who saw him believed that he was gifted with the power of enchantment.



GRAND ORGAN, WITH BELLOWS, AND DOUBLE KEYBOARD.
(*From a Drawing in a Ninth Century Psalter illustrating Psalm CL.*)

The term minstrel, or, in Norman-French, *ministraulx*, came into use in England soon after the Conquest, at which time it is believed that the class of minstrels and jesters grew much more numerous. The general language of France in the ninth century was the *langue d'Oc*, which closely resembled the dialects of the Catalonian. The language of the north, or *langue d'Oil*, varied but little from it. At this period the flowing accents of the southern tongue were wedded to music by minstrels, who were called troubadours in the southern provinces, and trouveres in the north.



HARP OF THE NINTH CENTURY.
(*From MS. of St. Blaise.*)

These poets became known throughout Europe for their songs of love and war, in which they celebrated the beauty of women and the achievements of the brave. The minstrels enjoyed many privileges, and travelled from place to place, in time of war as well as of peace, in perfect safety. Their persons were held sacred, and they were received wherever they went with the warmest welcome and hospitality.

In England the professors of the minstrel's art were of various classes, which were distinguished by the several names of singers, relaters of heroic actions, jesters, balancers, jugglers, and story-tellers. At this period every great baron kept a jester as a part of his household establishment.

The word jester, in its original sense, did not necessarily mean joker, or buffoon, but teller of tales, which might be of a kind to excite either laughter or pity. The jesters, however, were usually employed at feasts and in the hours of conviviality, and they found the tales of merriment so much more popular at such times, that it is probable the more serious part of their vocation fell into disuse. In later times the jesters and japers became mere merry-andrews, whose business it was to excite mirth by jokes and ludicrous gesticulations.

In olden times the number of musical instruments was considerable, but their names were still more numerous, because they were derived from the form and character of instruments which varied according to the caprice of the maker or the musician. Each nation had its peculiar instruments of music, and as these were described in each language by names appropriate to their qualities, the same instrument was frequently known by many names, while the same names sometimes applied to several instruments. The Romans, after their conquests, were in the habit of carrying back with them the music and the instruments which they found among the conquered nations, and thus it happened that, at a certain epoch, all the musical instruments of the known world were collected in the capital of the empire. At the fall of Rome, many of these fell into disuse and were forgotten; they were no longer needed to celebrate the festivals of pagan deities, or to add gaiety to the ovations to the emperors in the capitol. A letter of St. Jerome to Dardanus (*de diversis generibus musicorum instrumentorum*) gives an account of those instruments which remained in existence in the fifth century. St. Jerome enumerates the organ, various kinds of trumpets, the cithara, in the form of a Greek delta (Δ), with twenty-four strings; the *psalterium*, a small harp of a square form, with ten strings; the *tympanum*, or hand-drum, and several others.

These seem to have been almost the only musical instruments in use in the fifth century. A nomenclature of a similar kind appears in the ninth century, in a manuscript life of Charles the Great, by Aymeric de Peyra,* from which we find the number of instruments to have been nearly doubled in the course of four centuries, and their forms during this period had continually varied.

The flute is the most ancient of all instruments of music, and in the Middle Ages was found in many varieties. Among these was the double flute of the classic form, having two stems. The stem held in the left hand (*sinistra*) was for the high notes, and that held in the right hand (*dextra*) for the low notes. The two stems were sometimes held together, sometimes separate.

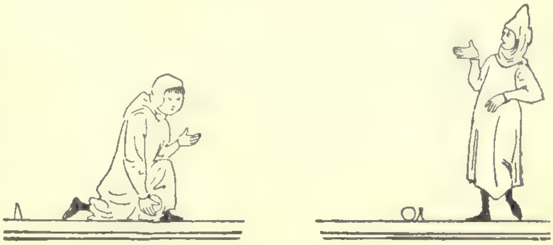
About the year 951, there was made for the church at Winchester an organ which, in size and construction, surpassed any that had hitherto been seen. This organ was divided into two parts, each having its bellows, its key-board, and its player; twelve bellows above and fourteen below were set in motion by sixty-six strong men, and the wind was passed along forty valves into four hundred pipes, arranged in groups of ten, and to each of these groups corresponded one of the twenty-four keys of each key-board. In spite of the great size of this organ, we can hardly believe that its sound was heard over the whole town (*undique per urbem*), as we are told by a contemporary poet.

The syrinx, which was, in fact, the Pandean pipe, was composed usually of seven tubes of unequal length, forming a straight line at the top for the mouth of the player.

Trumpets were much in use among the English, and were employed in the chase and in the tourney, as well as in sounding the charge in battle. They were also used at feasts, public assemblies, and as signals by which one man could communicate with another at a distance beyond the reach of the voice.

The lyre, which was the principal stringed instrument of the Greeks and the Romans, preserved its primitive form until the tenth century. The number of cords varied from three to eight. The lyre of the North—which was unquestionably the origin of the violin, and which already presented the shape of that instrument—had a bridge in the middle of the sound-board.

The *psalterium*, which must not be confounded with the *psalterion* of the thirteenth century, was a little portable harp, played either with one or both hands. After the fifth century its shape varied, and was sometimes square or triangular, and sometimes round. In the tenth century the psalterium gave place to the cithara, a name by which various stringed instruments had at first been vaguely described.



ENGLISH GAME OF BOWLS. (*From Royal MS.*, 20, *D* 4).

The English harp was at first only a triangular cithara, but that of the ninth century appears to have differed little from the modern instrument of that name, and the simplicity and elegance of its form had arrived nearly at perfection. The English gleemen usually sang to the harp, and this instrument was also in common use among persons who did not follow the profession of minstrels. Bede tells us that, as early as the seventh century, it was customary at convivial meetings to hand a harp from one person to another; and that every one present played upon it in turn, singing a song to the music. This may be presumed to have been the case when the professional harper, whose business it was to amuse the company, was not present.

LADIES HUNTING. (*From Royal MS.*, 2 *B.* 7.)

Games and exercises of strength and agility were common among the Anglo-Saxons. St. Cuthbert is stated by Bede to have excelled in running, wrestling, and other athletic sports. Feats of

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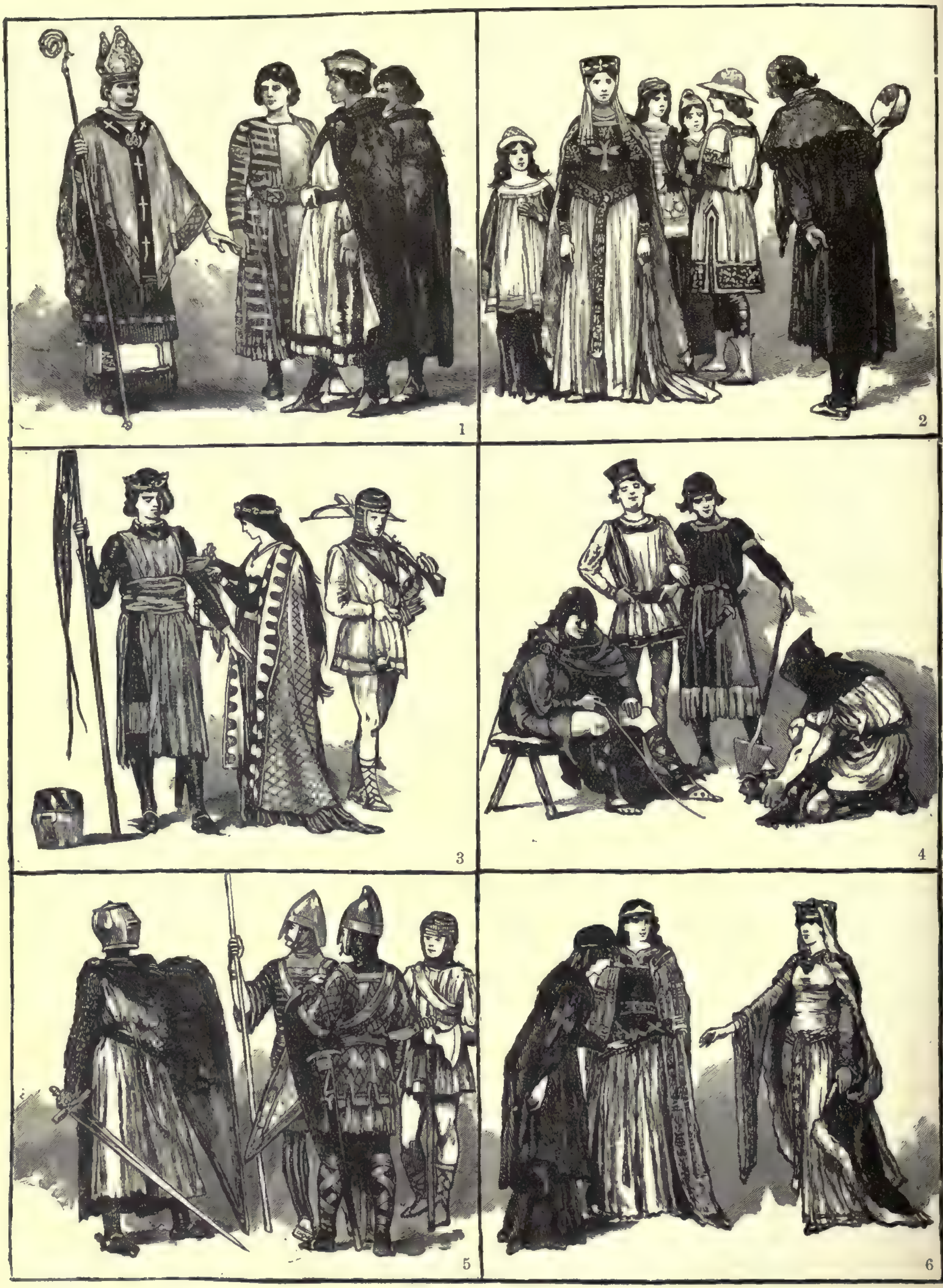
* In the National Library at Paris.



NORMAN COSTUMES OF THE ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH CENTURIES.

1. Bishops and Barons (11*th Century*). 2. Noble Ladies and Citizens (11*th Century*). 3. Prince, Princess, and Cross-Bowman (11*th Century*) 4 Artisans and Artificers (11*th Century*). 5. Military Costumes of the 12th Century. 6. Noble Ladies of Normandy (12*th Century*).

juggling were performed by the glee-men, who were the most important characters in the festivals and other popular gatherings. Some of the glee-men seem to have performed tricks, gambols, and feats of all kinds, while others were harpers, or bards, and ballad-singers.

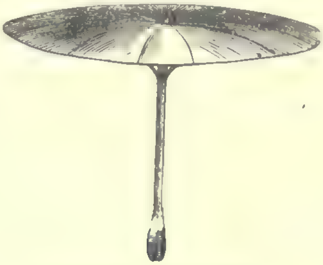
The in-door sports were various, and suitable to different ranks. The games of chess and backgammon were both known, or at least games very similar to them. Backgammon is said to have been invented in the tenth century.

The English and other German nations, as well as the Normans, were strongly attached to the sports of the field. At an early period we find that hunting was considered a necessary part of the education of every man of gentle blood. Alfred the Great, before he was twelve years of age, is represented to have "excelled in all the branches of that most noble art, to which he applied with incessant labour." We are told also that Edward the Confessor, though unlike his illustrious ancestor in most respects, delighted to follow a pack of hounds.

Hawking was a recreation in high favour among the nobles of the Middle Ages, and was practised also by the clergy and by ladies. In the Bayeux tapestry Harold is represented with his hounds by his side, and a hawk in his hand, when brought before William of Normandy. Such a mode of travelling was common among the noblemen of this period. Persons of high rank rarely appeared without their hawks, and sometimes even carried them into battle. These birds were considered as the symbols of nobility, and a man who gave up his hawk was regarded as disgraced and dishonoured. The birds were trained and tended

HAWKING PARTY IN THE ELEVENTH CENTURY.

with the greatest care. To prevent them from seeing, their heads were covered with a little cap fastened behind with straps, and adorned with a plume. The falcons of princes and great nobles were known by these plumes, being of the feathers of the bird of paradise. Thus armed, the birds were carried to the chase in a cage, and when it rained were covered with an umbrella, similar to that represented in the illustration.



UMBRELLA FOR HAWKS.

When the falcon became accustomed to his master, it was necessary to familiarise him to the noise of dogs and men; and to prevent the risk of his flying away, he was trained by means of the lure, which was an imitation of a bird. On the lure was placed a small piece of warm flesh of fowl, and the falcon was taught to come and eat at the voice of the falconer. A cord was attached to the bird's leg, and the person holding the cord retired to some paces' distance, while another lifted the bird's cap, and set him at liberty. The falconer then called the bird, showing the lure.

HAROLD. (*From the Bayeux Tapestry.*)

These details, with the accompanying engravings, are taken from the "*Livre du Roy Modus,*" the most ancient of all the works on Hawking.

The tournament, which was the principal amusement of the Norman nobility at the time of the Conquest, was not introduced into England until the reign of Stephen. Various military exercises were, however, in existence, among which was the quintain. A staff, from which a shield was hung, was fixed in the ground, and the performer, on horseback, rode full tilt at the mark, endeavouring to strike the shield with his lance. Sometimes the quintain was the figure of a Turk or Saracen, which was placed on a pivot in such a manner that, if the horseman failed to strike it in the face, he received a severe blow from the other end of the quintain, which turned round with great velocity.

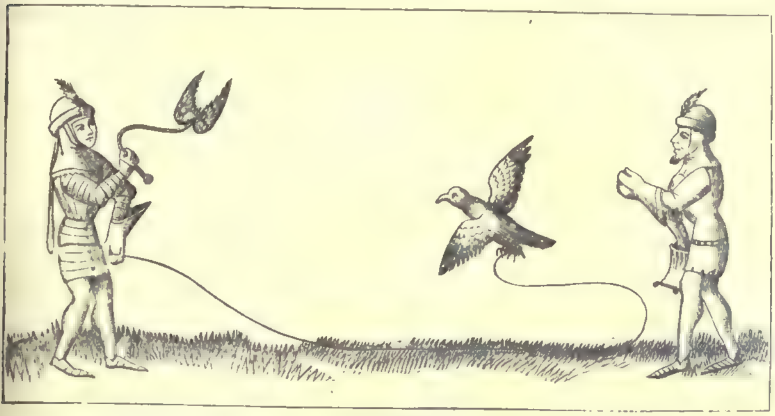
Some military sports are described by Strutt as peculiar to the young men of London in the twelfth century At this period, also, he tells us that it was common for the young men and maidens of the city to meet for dancing and merry-making after the labours of the day, and that the city damsels played on the citherns, and kept up the dance by the light of the moon (*usque imminente lunâ*).

HAWKING. (*Royal MS., 2 B. 7, fol. 75 b.*)

Many other sports were also common at this period, among which may be noticed sword and buckler play, and various games of ball.

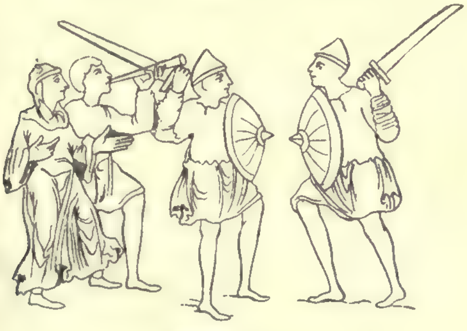
The leisure hours of the English women were spent in spinning, or in similar employments; and the lady of the house did not disdain to be among her maids, encouraging and assisting them in their duties. Strutt relates the following account, given by Ingulphus, of Edith, queen to Edward the Confessor:—"I have often seen her," he says, "while I was yet a boy, when my father was at the king's palace; and as I came from school, when I have met her, she would examine me in my learning, and from grammar she would proceed to logic (which she also understood), concluding with me in the most subtle argument; then causing one of her attendant maids to present me with three or four pieces of money, I was dismissed, being sent to the larder, where I was sure to get some eatables." The simplicity of manners here described soon disappeared when the throne of England was occupied by the Norman king.

The English appear to have been exceedingly fond of dress. Ladies of rank wore necklaces, bracelets, and rings, set with precious stones. Mantles, kirtles, and gowns were also in general use; and rouge was not unknown to them.



THE LURE.

In the men this taste for finery degenerated into effeminacy. They wore golden collars, and not unfrequently precious stones round the neck; and the wealthy wore costly bracelets and rings.



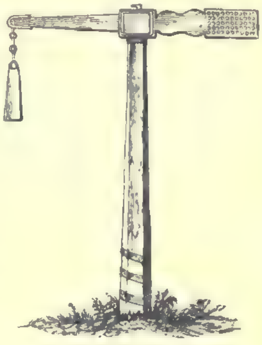
SWORD PLAY.

(*From Strutt's "Manners, Customs, etc., of the English People."*)

They had silk, linen, and woollen garments. Silk, from its costliness, was used only by the wealthy. The fashion of their garments of course varied. They had large mantles, which were ornamented with gold and gems; close coats or tunics, girded with a belt, which Strutt represents as having been put on over the head like a shirt. Many Englishmen are not aware that the smockfrock of the husbandmen of our own day is a pure piece of old-English costume; and if it were well made, tightened with a broad belt, and worn by a man of good carriage, it would form a much handsomer dress than the unmeaning stiff-cut coats of our time. Socks and stockings, and other covering for the legs, are mentioned by English writers.

The articles of costume were of great variety. A taste for gorgeous finery appears in the dress of the male sex. We read of a king's coronation garment being made of silk woven with gold flowers; and of a cloak studded with gold and gems. The dress of the soldiers and civilians usually consisted of a close coat or tunic, reaching only to the knee, and a short cloak over the left shoulder, which buckled on the right. This cloak was often trimmed with an edging of gold. The kings and nobles also commonly wore a dress very similar to this, only richer and more elegant. In the paintings of the MSS. the women are usually represented in a long loose robe, reaching to the ground, and with loose sleeves, the latter sometimes hanging a yard in length. Upon the head is a hood or veil, which falls down before, and is gathered into folds round the neck and breast. The robe is often ornamented with broad borders of different colours.

Both men and women wore shoes, or rather slippers; the legs of the men being covered half way up with a kind of bandage wound round, or else a straight stocking reaching above the knee. Up to the period of the Conquest, the taste for gold ornaments had increased; and massive bracelets for the arms and neck, rings for the fingers, and chains of gold were common. Among the nobility circlets of gold set with jewels were worn on the head; and belts and girdles were much admired, and were often richly ornamented.



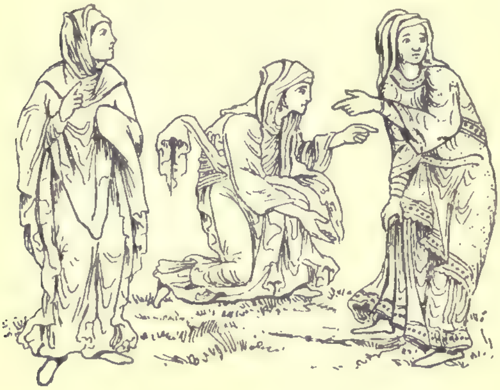
QUINTAIN.

From the paintings of some of the English

MSS. a knowledge may be gathered of their customs at table. In the engraving of "The English Dinner Party" given on page 101, the table is of an oval form, and covered with a cloth. Upon it, besides a knife and spoon, there are a bowl with a fish, two other dishes, and some loaves of bread. At each end of the table are two attendants upon their knees, with a dish in one hand, and in the other a spit holding a piece of meat, which they are presenting to the guests. In other drawings of the MSS. the table is of a different form; ladies are shown as present, and the two sexes are arranged apparently without any precise order.

BOB APPLE. (*From Royal MS., 2 B. 7, fol. 166 b.*)

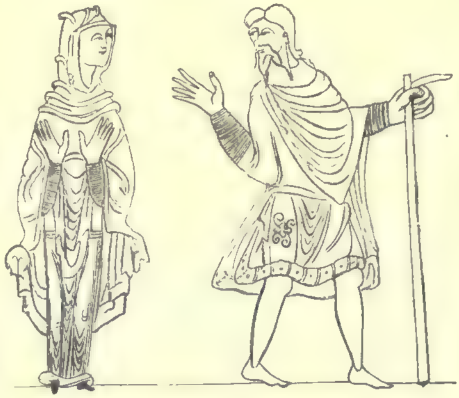
Cups of gold and silver were used, and also of bone and wood. Horns were much in vogue at table. A curiously carved horn of the Old English times is still preserved in York Cathedral. Glass vessels were little known in this country previous to the Norman Conquest. A disciple of Bede applied to Lullus in France, to know if there was any man in that neighbourhood, who could make glass vessels well; "for," said he, "we are ignorant and helpless in this art."



SAXON COSTUMES. (*From Strutt.*)

Of the furniture in use among the English little information has come down to us. Mention may, however, be made of hangings to be suspended on the walls of rooms, and adorned with figures of golden birds in needlework. The love of gaudy colours which prevailed at that day was apparent in the furniture as well as in the dresses of the people; and the hangings and curtains were stained with purple and various other colours. Among the benches and chairs in use, some are represented as having animals' heads at the extremities.

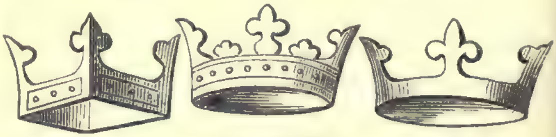
Candles have probably been in use from a period of high antiquity, and were certainly known in the tenth century. The English word for candlestick —*candelsticca*—seems to denote that the earlier candlesticks were made of wood. At this period the candle was not placed in a socket, as at present, but fixed on a long spike.



SAXON COSTUMES. (*Cott. MS. Claud. B. 4.*)

We find mention made of a curtain, sheets, and other clothes appertaining. A pillow of straw is also mentioned. Bear-skins were sometimes used as a part of bed furniture.

The English seem to have practised great personal cleanliness. The use of warm baths was common, for mention is made of a nun, who, as an act of voluntary penance, washed in them only on festivals. It was also enjoined by the canons as a charitable duty to give to the poor meal, fire, fodder, bathing, bed and clothes.

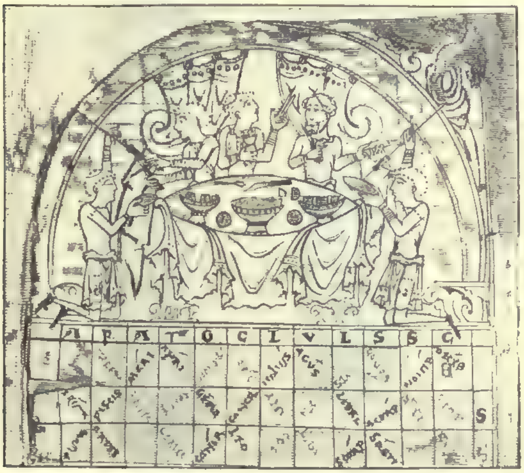


ENGLISH CROWNS.

At the time of the Conquest the condition of the people in France and Normandy differed little from what it was in our own country, though superior refinement reigned at the courts. The nobles and higher ecclesiastics, all who possessed wealth, or who were in a position to seize it by force, inhabited their castles and country houses, where they collected about them whatever the age could afford of objects of luxury and elegance. Solitude and discouragement reigned around their dwellings. Industry and the arts languished obscurely in the towns, and commerce, restrained in its developments, was often conducted in secrecy and danger. The merchant was compelled to travel with his goods from the castle of one baron to that of another, and, living without a fixed residence or depôt for them, he could by this means escape the exactions of the nobles, who, in fact, were to some extent dependent upon his services. Frequently the baron would cause some of his serfs to learn the mechanical arts, so that the several labours of the carpenter, the armourer, the tailor, &c., might be available at once when required.

ENGLISH SHOES.

From an early period the Franks of noble race wore long hair and beards, and the custom of Christian priests was the same until the third and fourth centuries. In the time of Charles the Great the costume was still simple. The Franks piqued themselves upon their elegance; of which an example may be found in the journey of Rigonda, daughter of Childeric, to visit the king of the Spanish Goths, to whom she was betrothed. "Rigonda, daughter of Childeric, arrived at Tours with her treasures. Seeing that she had reached the frontier of the Goths, she began to retard her march, and so much the more because those about her said it was necessary for her to stop in that neighbourhood, because they were fatigued with the journey; their clothes were dirty, their shoes worn out, and the harness of their horses and chariots in a bad condition. They insisted that it was necessary, first, to place these things in good order, so as to continue the journey, and appear with elegance before their lady's future husband, lest, if they arrived badly equipped among the Goths, they should be laughed at." *


A P A T O C I V L S S C
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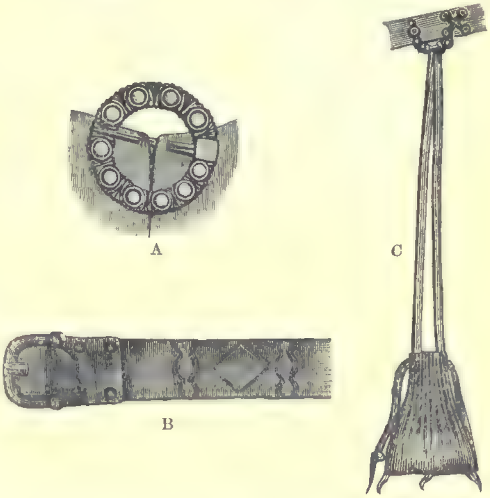
ENGLISH DINNER PARTY. (*From Cotton MS. Tib. C. 6, fol. 5 b.*)

The Normans, who arrived with their short dresses and coats of mail, adopted the costume of the Franks, which they followed in all its phases; and in the following century they began to introduce the fashions of the Continent into England. At the time of the Conquest, however, the custom generally prevailed among the Normans of shaving not only the beard, but the back of the head, as appears from the figures in the Bayeux tapestry.



CLOAK-PIN (A), BUCKLE (B), AND POUCH (C) OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

(A *and* C *from the effigy of Berengaria of Navarre on her tomb at Fontevrault;* B *from the effigy of Isabella d'Angoulême at Fontevrault. From Stothard's "Monumental Effigies."*)

In the tenth and eleventh centuries the costume of the higher classes usually consisted of a long tunic, confined by a girdle, over which was a large cloak. The soldiers wore a short coat of mail over a tunic, which descended to the knees; their arms comprised the long-bow, the cross-bow, the sword, lance, buckler, and gisarme. The gisarme is said to be the weapon called the brown bill by Chaucer It was in general use in the twelfth century, and was retained as late as the battle of Flodden.

The costume of the women of Normandy consisted of a simple head-dress, with long robes girded about the waist. In paintings of this period the hair is seldom seen, but the manner in which it was worn appears to have varied. Sometimes it is represented as gathered tightly about the head, and sometimes it descends in long plaits upon the shoulders. Princesses and ladies of rank wore a robe of ermine, or a tunic either with or without sleeves; a veil was also added, which covered the head, and descended in folds over the bosom.

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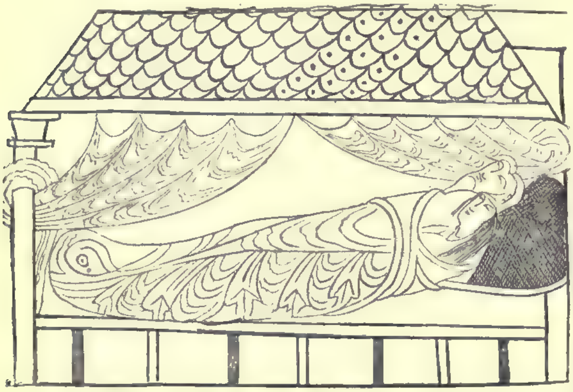
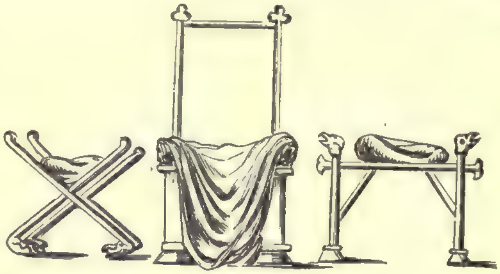
* Gregory of Tours.

EARLY ENGLISH CANDLESTICK.

After the death of Charles the Great literature and the arts in France experienced a gradual decline until the tenth century, when a new and remarkable impetus was given to learning by the Moors in Spain. English learning, which had flourished during the reigns of Alfred and his immediate successors, began rapidly to decay during the stormy period of the Danish invasions; and from the time of the accession of Canute to that of the Norman Conquest little or no revival of letters appears to have taken place. During the period which intervened between these two events the country enjoyed a considerable degree of repose, and it can hardly be doubted that some of the schools and religious houses were re-established; but the long period of peace was marked by the growth of indolence and sensuality among the people, rather than by the spread of education.


ENGLISH BED. (*Cotton MS. Claud. B. 4, fol. 27 b.*)

William the Conqueror, says a modern writer, "patronised and loved letters. He filled the bishoprics and abbacies of England with the most learned of his countrymen, who had been educated at the University of Paris, at that time the most flourishing school in Europe. Many of the Norman prelates preferred in England by the Conqueror were polite scholars. Godfrey, Prior of St. Swithin's, at Winchester, a native of Cambray, was an elegant Latin epigrammatist, and wrote with the smartness and ease of Martial; a circumstance which, by the way, shows that the literature of the monks at this period was of a more liberal cast than that which we commonly annex to their character and profession."

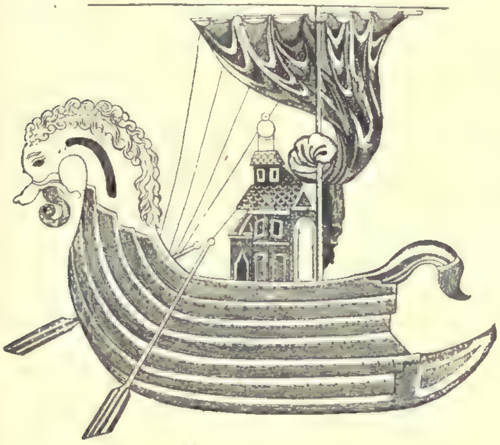

CHAIRS. (*Cotton MS. Tib. C. 6.*)

William founded the abbeys of Battle and Selby, with other religious houses, and endowed them with ample revenues. Many of his nobles were incited by his example to the erection of monasteries upon their estates. These institutions, which afforded leisure and protection to men of letters, acted as powerful incentives to the pursuit of learning, and promoted in no small degree the interest of literature.

SAXON IVORY COMB AND CASE, FOUND AT YORK. LENGTH 5½ INCHES. (*British Museum.*)

The art of the sculptor had made little progress in Europe previous to the tenth century. Two centuries later, the Burgundian school was in its zenith, and enriched the churches and monasteries of France with many admirable specimens of sculpture. Bernard II., Abbé of Montier-Saint-Jean, in rebuilding the door of his church, caused it to be adorned with representations of the Saviour and the twelve apostles; and in other instances the arts were applied to decorate the religious houses, or the graves of the illustrious dead.

In Normandy we find at this period the names of several sculptors celebrated for their works. Among these was Otho, the sculptor of the tomb of William the Conqueror, in 1087, and other monuments of a similar kind; Azo, builder of the cathedral of Sens, and of several others. The masons and sculptors of Normandy formed at this epoch an important corporation.



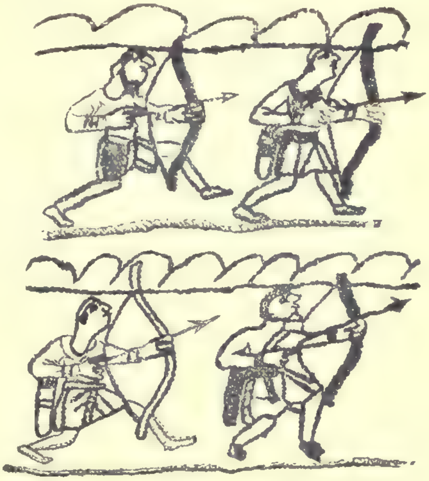
NORMAN VESSEL. *(From Strutt.)*

At the beginning of the twelfth century, when the Normans became securely established in their conquests, they displayed the utmost activity in the erection of magnificent buildings both in England and Normandy. According to William of Malmesbury,* churches rose up in every village, and monasteries in the towns and cities, built in a style unknown before. "You might behold ancient buildings restored upon their sites throughout the country, so that each wealthy man considered that day as lost to him, on which he neglected to perform some magnificent action."

The Anglo-Norman barons who engaged in these works obtained from their own country and from France the assistance of the best architects and sculptors. William of Sens, one of these artists, reconstructed the cathedral of Canterbury in 1176; and other foreign artists were employed to restore the abbeys of Croyland, of York, of Monkwearmouth, and others.

NORMAN SOLDIERS. *(From the Bayeux Tapestry.)*

While it is evident that results highly favourable to the progress of literature and the arts in this country were produced by the Norman conquest, there is also every reason to believe that the tendency to sensuality, which was so strong among the English people, experienced a salutary check from the introduction of Norman manners. The foreign invasion entailed immediate sufferings upon the conquered race, but its results were favourable to the progress of civilisation, and tended in no small degree to the advance of the nation in power and greatness.



NORMAN BOWMEN OF THE ELEVENTH CENTURY.

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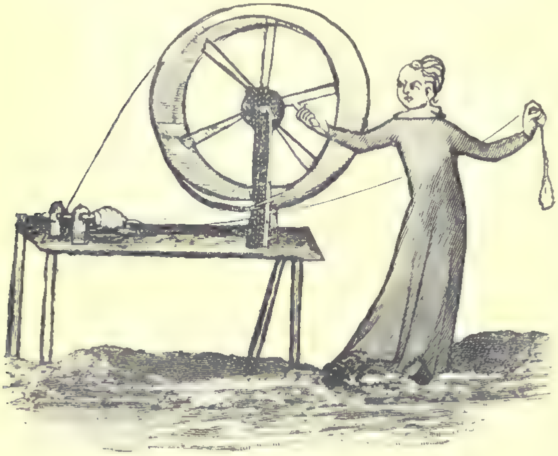
* The historical works of William of Malmesbury consist of seven books containing a record of the acts of the English kings, from the arrival of the English to the time of the author's death, in the year 1143.

The Normans are understood to have introduced into England many elegancies and refinements in the habits of common life and the customs of the table. It has been already stated that the English were a people of gross appetite, who were accustomed to spend many hours of the day at feasts. The Normans, on the other hand, appear, on their arrival in England, to have distinguished themselves by the moderation and refinement of their mode of living. Among the dainties held in the highest esteem by the Normans were the peacock and the crane. The boar's head was considered a regal dish, and it was brought in at great feasts in a kind of procession, preceded by musicians.



WOMAN SPINNING. (*Royal MS.*, 10 *E.* 4, *fol.* 187.)

It would appear that the improvements thus introduced were rather moral than material, as we find no mention made of new articles of furniture or other conveniences as having appeared at the time of the Conquest. Our information on this subject, is, however, scanty, and it is probable that the improvement of taste and increased wealth were soon manifested in the application of the useful and decorative arts to the conveniences of domestic life.

A most faithful and valuable record of costumes and manners at the time of the Conquest is to be found in the remarkable work known as the Bayeux Tapestry, which tradition has, probably with justice, ascribed to Matilda, the wife of the Conqueror.

The Bayeux tapestry is a chronicle of the conquest of England by the Normans, opening with the mission of Harold to Duke William, and terminating with the battle of Hastings. The designs, which were probably the work of an Italian artist, are represented in worsted work, the colours of which, notwithstanding the great age of the tapestry, are still bright and distinct. The tapestry was placed at an early period in a side chapel of the cathedral of Bayeux, where it was regarded with veneration by the people. During the consulate of Napoleon, the ancient relic was removed from Bayeux to Paris, where it remained for several months, and was visited by the First Consul himself. At the present time the tapestry is preserved in the library of the town of Bayeux, and is exposed to view in glass cases.

This remarkable monument of skill and industry originally formed one piece; and, according to a learned authority,* measures two hundred and twenty-seven feet in length, by about twenty inches in breadth. The groundwork of it is a strip of rather fine linen cloth, which, through age, has assumed the tinge of brown holland. The stitches consist of lines of coloured worsted laid side by side, and bound down at intervals by cross fastenings. The colours chiefly used are dark and light blue, red, pink, yellow, buff, and dark and light green.

The central portion of the tapestry is occupied with the delineation of the narrative, and there is also an ornamental border at the top and bottom of the field, which contains figures of birds and beasts. Many of these are of fantastic shapes, and are, probably, meant to represent the dragons, griffins, and other fabulous creatures which are so often referred to in the romances of that period.

The two upper lines of the engraving of the tapestry on page 105 are consecutive. They have been chosen for illustration as affording a favourable view of the character of the design. The story is taken up at the part where Harold, after swearing fealty to William of Normandy on the relics of the saints, returns to England, and presents himself to King Edward. The first words which occur over the figures at the top of the page are, "*Anglicam terram.*" The complete sentence, the former part of which is omitted in the engraving, reads thus:—"*Hic Harold dux reversus*

SACRAMENTAL WAFER BOX OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

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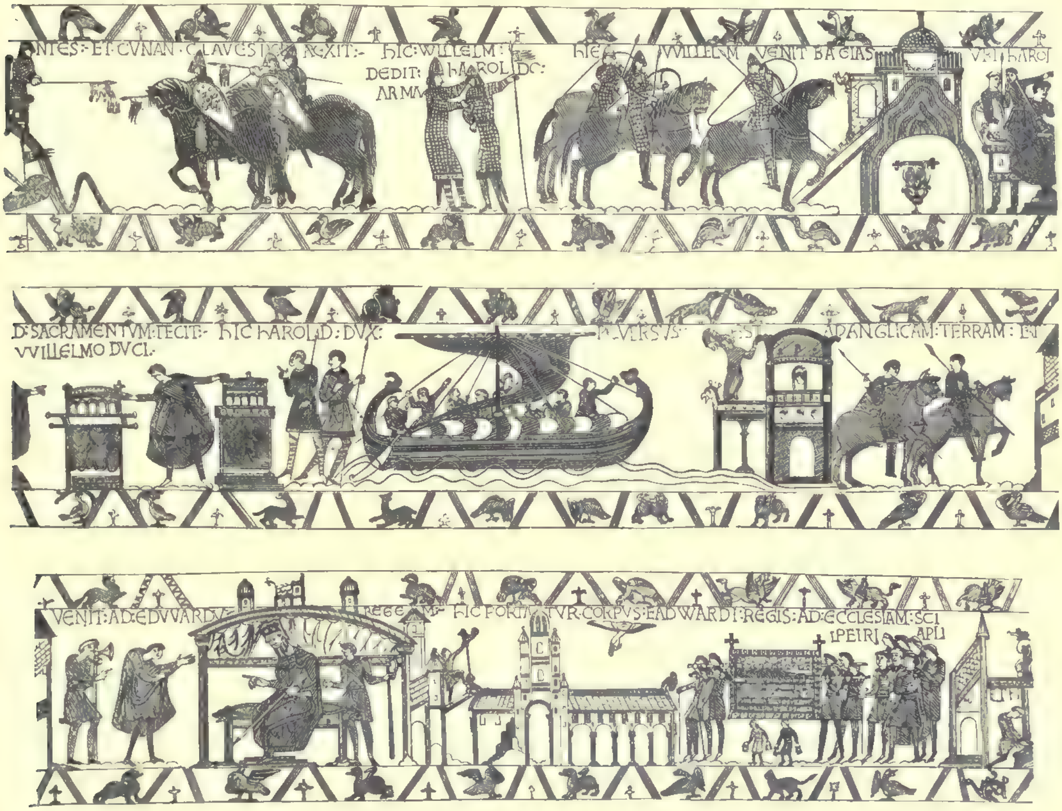
* The Rev. J. C. Bruce, "The Bayeux Tapestry Elucidated."

est Anglicam terram" ("Here the Lord Harold returned to England"). The horsemen of Harold's train are represented on their way to the court; "*Et venit ad Edwardum regem*" ("And came to Edward the king"). Farther on we see Edward seated on his throne, and Harold receiving audience and communicating the ill success of his adventure.

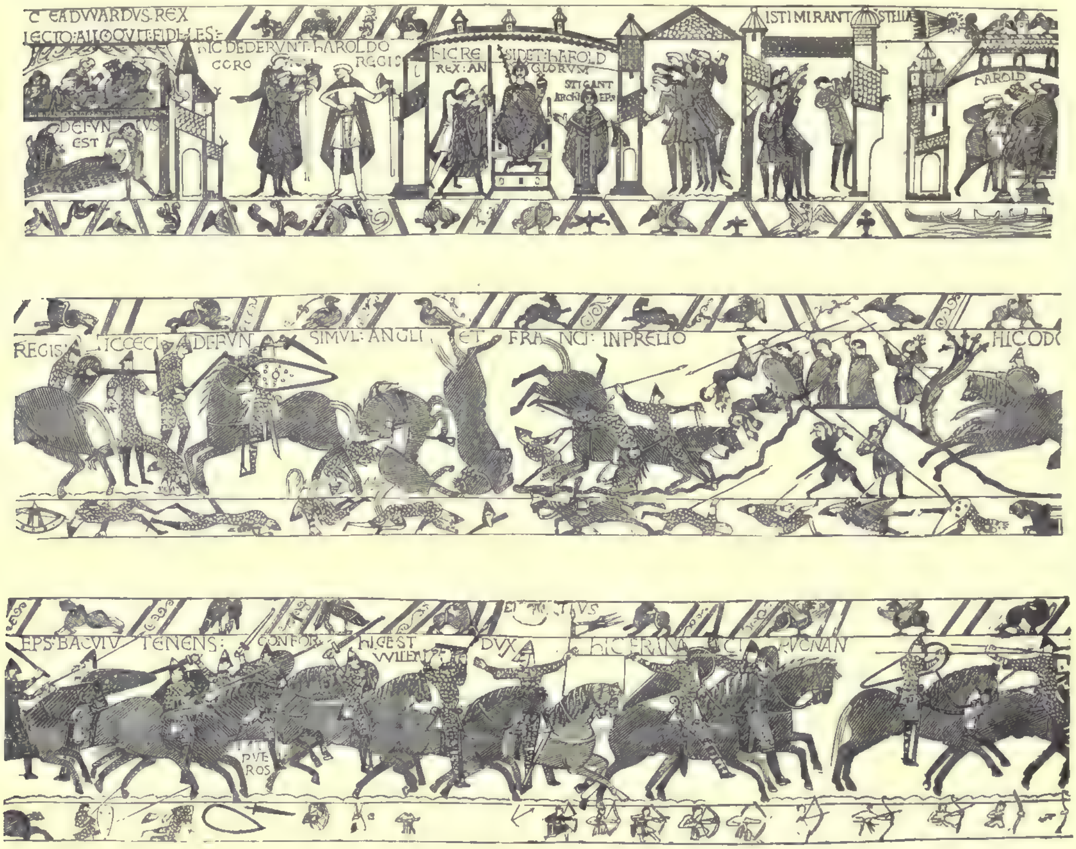
The tapestry proceeds to depict Harold's unfortunate descent upon the Norman coast, his capture by Guy of Ponthieu, his release by William the Conqueror, the expedition into Brittany, and the ceremony of the fateful oath. "*Hic Willelmus venit Bagias ubi Haroldus sacramentum fecit*" ("Here William comes to Bayeux, where Harold takes an oath") is all the information we have on this most important event.



INCIDENTS COPIED FROM THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY. (*After Stothard.*)

Worn down by anxiety, and by the anticipation of evils which he foresaw, but was unable to prevent, Edward the Confessor soon afterwards died, and was buried at Westminster, in the church which he had himself built in a new and costly style of architecture. The tapestry shows us the church of St. Peter, at Westminster, and the funeral procession of the king. It will be observed that the church, which was built in the Early Norman style, is provided at one end with a weathercock, which a workman is represented in the act of putting up. "By this," says the authority already quoted, "the designer of the tapestry means to show that the work was but just completed, when the interment of the Confessor took place. A hand appears over the western end of the church to denote the finger of Providence, and to indicate that it was the will of God that the remains of the deceased king should be deposited in that building." The arrangements of the funeral procession are simple—a boy appears at each side of the bier ringing bells, and various attendants and priests are following. The words written above are: "*Hic portatur corpus Edwardi regis ad ecclesiam sancti Petri Apostoli*" ("Here the body of King Edward is carried to the church of St. Peter the Apostle").

Then the artist represents to us the election of Harold; the appearance of the comet at Eastertide which filled men's mind with fear, and the anger of Duke William when he heard of the choice of the English. Then follows a series of most spirited representations of the Norman preparations; the working men felling trees, preparing planks, and dragging the ships to the shore. Presently the great armament is observed in full sail across the Channel, and a little farther on the horses disembark. Then comes a series of tableaux representing the movements of William and his comrades until Harold comes southwards. "*Hic milites exierunt de Hestengâ et venerunt ad prelium contra Haroldum regem*" ("Here the soldiers have departed from Hastings and march to battle against Harold the king").



INCIDENTS COPIED FROM THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY. (*After Stothard.*)

The engraving on this page is taken from another portion of the tapestry, and represents the battle of Hastings. The thick of the combat is here delineated, according to the inscription, "*Hic ceciderunt simul Angli et Franci in prelio*" ("Here at the same time English and French fell in the battle"). Horses and men are tumbling about in the agonies of death. The mailed coats and pointed helmets of the Normans are easily distinguished from the English costume. Farther on we find a party of English posted on the hill, who are making a desperate stand against the enemy with their lances. At a time when the fortune of the day seemed turning against the Normans, Odo of Bayeux galloped among the soldiers, and restored their drooping courage. He is represented in the tapestry with a staff, probably a badge of authority, and the inscription above is: "*Hic Odo episcopus, tenens baculum, confortat pueros*" ("Here Bishop Odo, holding a staff, encourages the soldiers").

The last figure in the engraving is that of the Duke of Normandy, who is represented at the head of his troops waving his sword. The inscription runs: "*Hiç est Dux Wilhelm*" ("This is Duke William").

The tapestry itself goes on to delineate other details of the battle, describes the place where Harold fell, and ends with the flight of the English before the conquering troops of Normandy.

CHAPTER XII.

THE REIGN OF WILLIAM I.

After Hastings—Election of Edgar Atheling—Submission of London and Accession of William—Tumult during his Coronation—Character of his Government—Return to Normandy—Affairs during his Absence—Suppression of the First English Rebellion—Rebellion in the North—The Last National Effort—The Reform of the Church—The Erection of Castles—Plan of a Norman Castle—End of Edwin and Morcar—"The Last of the Saxons"—Affairs in Maine—Conspiracy of the Norman Nobles—The Execution of Waltheof—Punishment of Ralph the Wader—The Story of Walcher of Durham—Expeditions to Scotland and Wales—Quarrels between William and his Sons—Domesday Book—The Creation of the New Forest—Punishment of Odo of Bayeux—The Death of William—Incidents at his Burial—Character of William.

GREAT as were the disasters of Hastings, the English were still in a position to offer a powerful resistance, had they been united and firm. The population of London took up arms, and were further strengthened by the arrival of the Earls Edwin and Morcar within their walls, who now saw how foolish their previous treachery had been. The Witena-gemot was convened, in which, as the brothers of Harold were both slain, and his sons too young to govern, Edgar Atheling, the grand-nephew of Edward the Confessor, the only descendant of Cerdic, was elected king, chiefly through the influence of the primate Stigand, and Aldred, Archbishop of York.

Although dear to the people on account of his birth, Edgar possessed no one quality necessary for the crisis which menaced his kingdom. So weak was his character, that it would have been difficult for him, under the most favourable circumstances, to have maintained himself upon the throne; and he was totally unfitted to cope with an adversary, who was not only the most warlike, but one of the ablest princes of his time.

William remained for some days quietly at Hastings after his victory, not doubting that the terrified inhabitants of London would send a deputation to his camp with offers of submission. This inactivity, however, was but of short duration. Finding that no one came to him with offers from the English, and learning that several vessels which his wife Matilda had sent to him with reinforcements from Normandy had been attacked and driven from the coast at Romney, the duke felt that it was time to act, but tempered his ardour with prudence.

His first care was to assure his communications with the continent, and establish a post to which he could retreat in case of reverse. With this intention, he followed with his army the line of coast between Hastings and Dover, stopping by the way at Romney, which he pillaged and burnt. The garrison of Dover Castle, a fortress at that time deemed impregnable, yielded without a blow, vanquished by the terror of his name; and was replaced by a force of Normans. Here William remained till he received fresh troops and supplies from Normandy; after which, he advanced with the flower of his army to London.

Finding the approaches to the city well defended, the Conqueror made no attempt to carry it by assault, but dispersed his troops in the neighbourhood, with orders to burn and plunder the villages, and to intercept all supplies to the capital. The two earls, Morcar and Edwin—refusing to yield obedience to the phantom of a king whom the ambitious prelates, who hoped to govern in his name, had caused to be elected—had retired to their respective governments. After their departure the military authority fell into the hands of Esegar. Although deprived of the use of his limbs, he caused himself to be borne on his litter to every point of the city, examined the defences, and exercised the utmost vigilance and zeal for the general safety.

But the earls and people gradually withdrew their allegiance from the feeble Edgar, and resolved to take the oath of fidelity to a new sovereign in the camp of the Normans. The primate Stigand was the first who went over to William, whom he encountered at Wallingford, and who received him with hollow marks of affection and respect, addressing him by the titles of "Archbishop" and "Father" in exchange for those of "King" and "Son." The example of Stigand was quickly followed by his brother of York, and the principal nobles and prelates who had assembled in London. At length Edgar Atheling himself came and resigned into the hands of the Conqueror the crown he had so lately received. William accepted it with affected modesty, invited the barons to express their wishes, and, on finally ascending the throne, made it appear that he did so in obedience to their desire.

Christmas Day was the day fixed for the coronation of the new king, and the church of Westminster the place appointed; but before trusting himself within the walls of London, the wily Norman caused some of the strongest entrenchments to be destroyed, and commenced strengthening the fortress which has since grown into the Tower of London.

William decided on receiving the crown from the hands of Aldred, Archbishop of York, and he also resolved that the ceremony should take place with the same formalities which marked the accession of the Saxon kings, wishing to appear to hold his crown, not as conqueror, but as the elect of the English people.

A serious tumult took place during the ceremony. When the archbishop demanded of the assembled nobles whether they would have William for their king, the reply was given with acclamations so loud as to startle the Norman soldiers stationed outside the church. Supposing that an attack was being made upon their duke, the troops rushed to the English houses adjoining the abbey, and set them on fire. Both Norman and Saxon nobles rushed from the sacred edifice, leaving their new sovereign and a few churchmen alone within the walls. Keeping his self-possession, William commanded that the ceremony should be concluded; and in the midst of the cries of his new subjects, who were being massacred on all sides, the flames of the burning houses, the pillage and devastation, he took the oath to govern according to the laws of the kings his predecessors. Directly after his coronation, William, not deeming himself in perfect safety in London, whose inhabitants bitterly resented the outrage they had been subjected to, removed to Barking, where he received the homage of many of the great earls, churchmen, and thanes.

The conduct of William at this period appears to have been most prudent; he respected the rights of his new subjects and the laws of property, though it was impossible for him to restrain the rapacious disposition of his followers. The treasures of Harold and the donations of the nobility, which were supposed to be voluntary, furnished the first largess, which he distributed amongst his companions in arms. He granted at least nominal privileges to the citizens of London, in the hope of reconciling them to his government, and took strong measures to secure the future tranquillity of the capital. It is true that he disarmed the inhabitants; but at the same time, in order to establish a favourable impression of his justice, he punished with rigour various acts of outrage that had been committed. He introduced into England that strict execution of justice for which his administration had been celebrated in Normandy; and even during this violent revolution, disorder and oppression met with rigorous punishment. His army in particular was governed with severe discipline; and, notwithstanding the insolence of victory, care was taken to give as little offence as possible to the jealousy of the vanquished. The king seemed solicitous to unite, in an amicable manner, the Normans and the English, by intermarriages and alliances; and all his new subjects who approached his person were received with affability and regard. No signs of suspicion appeared, not even towards Edgar Atheling, the heir of the ancient royal family, whom William confirmed in the honours of Earl of Oxford, conferred on him by Harold, and whom he affected to treat with the highest kindness, as nephew to the Confessor, his great friend and benefactor. Though he confiscated the estates of Harold, and of those who had fought in the battle of Hastings on the side of that prince, whom he represented as a usurper, he seemed willing to admit of every plausible excuse for past opposition to his pretensions, and received many into favour who had carried arms against him.

William set sail from England in the month of May, 1067, to return to Normandy, accompanied by the most considerable nobility of England, who, while they served to grace his court by their presence and magnificent retinues, were in reality hostages for the fidelity of the nation. Among these were Edgar Atheling, Stigand the primate, the Earls Edwin and Morcar, Waltheof, the son of the brave Earl Siward, with others eminent for the greatness of their fortunes and families, or for their ecclesiastical and civil dignities. During his absence, William had entrusted the government of his newly-acquired country to his half-brother and most trusted companion, Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, and William Fitz-Osborn. The affection of the king had elevated Odo at a very early age to the see of Bayeux, where he displayed great ability, not only in the administration of the affairs of his diocese, but in the councils of his sovereign. In obedience to the canon of the Church, which strictly forbids the shedding of blood by a priest, he never carried arms, although he constantly attended his brother in all his battles, assisting him with his advice and resources, which were large. He was, says a contemporary historian, "a prelate of such rare and noble qualities, that the English, barbarians as they were, could not but admire him." To Odo had been assigned the government of Kent and the South, the remainder of the kingdom being committed to the care of Fitz-Osborn. This noble was the steadfast friend of the Conqueror, whom he invariably supported in his disputes with his own turbulent Norman subjects, and to his influence was attributed the resolution of William to make good his claims to the crown of England by the invasion of the country. Fitz-Osborn was looked upon by the Normans as one of the greatest warriors of the age; and by the subjugated and suffering English as the powerful instrument of the Conqueror in oppressing their unhappy country, which he ruled with a rod of iron.

Discontents and complaints multiplied rapidly during the absence of William, and secret conspiracies were entered into against the government. The Norman historians throw the blame of these proceedings on the fickle, turbulent spirit of the English, who, doubtless, when they began to recover from their panic and surprise, felt ashamed of having yielded so tamely to the enemy. The inhabitants of Kent, who had been the first to acknowledge him, were also the first to attempt to shake off the yoke, and, assisted by Eustace, Count of Boulogne, endeavoured to surprise the castle of Dover, but failed. Edric the Forester, being pressed by the ravages committed by the Normans on his lands, entered into an lliance with two Welsh princes to repel force by force. A secret conspiracy was gradually formed throughout England to get rid of the Normans by a general massacre, like that perpetrated on the Danes. So strong were the feelings of the Saxons, that the vassals of Earl Copsige, on the refusal of that noble to lead them against the invaders, put him to death as a traitor to his country.

The king, informed of these proceedings, hastened over to England, and by his sudden appearance disconcerted the machinations of his new subjects. Those who were most compromised in these transactions betrayed their fears by flight, and William confiscated their estates, which he bestowed upon his Norman followers. The inhabitants of Exeter, however, instigated by Gytha, mother to King Harold, refused to admit a Norman garrison; and betaking themselves to arms, were strengthened by the assistance of the neighbouring inhabitants of Devonshire and Cornwall. The king hastened with his forces to chastise this revolt; and on his approach, the wiser and more considerable citizens, sensible of the unequal contest, persuaded the people to submit, and to deliver hostages for their obedience. A sudden mutiny of the populace broke this agreement; and William, appearing before the walls, ordered the eyes of one of the hostages to be put out, as an earnest of the severity which the rebels might expect if they persevered in their revolt. The inhabitants, undaunted by this savage act, refused to surrender, and sustained the attack of the king's forces for eighteen days, during which the besiegers suffered heavy loss. When the city at length was taken, the brave men of Exeter obtained terms by which their lives and property were secured to them.

GREAT SEAL OF WILLIAM I.

William then proceeded to conquer Gloucestershire and Worcestershire.

Although Fortune appeared to lavish her smiles upon the Conqueror, bitter discontent was brooding in the hearts of the English, who saw themselves stripped one by one of their liberties and privileges, and whenever they met with the Normans in small parties the people set on them and slew them without mercy. An insurrection at last broke out in the north of England, headed by the Earls Morcar and Edwin, who bitterly regretted their short-sighted policy in not having supported Edgar Atheling on the throne. Before appealing to arms, these powerful nobles had secured the assistance of the Welsh; of Malcolm, King of Scotland; and of Sweyn, King of Denmark. Edwin was opposing the King because the latter, who had promised his daughter to the earl in marriage, would not keep his word.

William knew the importance of celerity in quelling a revolt, especially when supported by such powerful leaders. He advanced, therefore, with rapid marches towards the north. On his way he gave orders to fortify Warwick Castle, which he committed to the government of Henry de Beaumont, one of his nobles; while Nottingham Castle was entrusted to William Peverell, another Norman leader. Using the utmost expedition, the Conqueror reached York before the promised succour had arrived or the English were prepared for resistance; the city threw open its gates to the Conqueror. "Their submission was received," as Lingard says, "with a promise of forgiveness, and a resolution of vengeance." The king at this time fortified several castles in different parts of the country, and thus securing possession of the military power, left Edwin and Morcar, whom he pretended to spare, destitute of all support, and the two earls had no other resource than to appeal to William's clemency. A peace which he made with Malcolm, who did him homage for Cumberland, seemed at the same time to deprive them of all prospect of foreign assistance. Edgar Atheling, dreading the unscrupulous policy of William, yielded to the advice of Cospatrick, a powerful Northumbrian noble, and fled with him, accompanied by his mother Agatha and his two sisters Margaret and Christina, to Scotland, where they were hospitably received by Malcolm, who soon afterwards espoused the former princess—the latter became a nun.

In 1069 the English made their final effort of resistance. Godwin, Edmund, and Magnus, three sons of Harold, had, immediately after the defeat at Hastings, sought a retreat in Ireland, where, having met with a kind reception from Dermot and other princes of that country, they projected an invasion of England; and they hoped that all the exiles from Denmark, Scotland, and Wales, assisted by forces from these several countries, would at once commence hostilities, and rouse the English against their haughty conquerors. They landed in Devonshire, but found Count Brian of Brittany, at the head of some foreign troops, ready to oppose them, and, being defeated in several actions, they were obliged to retreat to their ships, and return to Ireland.

The efforts of William, however, were now directed to the north, where affairs had fallen into the utmost confusion. Robert de Comines, the newly-appointed Earl of Durham, was surprised in the town by the exasperated people, and put to death, with the whole of his followers. This success animated the inhabitants of York, who, rising in arms, besieged in the castle William Malet, their governor. William, however, soon put down the rebellion, built a second castle, and then retired southwards. In September the Danish troops landed from 240 vessels; Osberne, brother of King Sweyn, was entrusted with the command of these forces, and he was accompanied by Harold and Canute, two sons of that monarch; Edgar Atheling appeared from Scotland, and brought along with him Cospatrick, Waltheof, Siward, and other leaders, who, partly from the hopes which they gave of Scottish succours, and partly from their authority in those parts, easily persuaded the warlike and discontented Northumbrians to join the insurrection. Malet, that he might better provide for the defence of the citadel of York, set fire to some houses which lay contiguous; but this expedient proved the immediate cause of his destruction. The flames, spreading into the neighbouring streets, reduced the whole city to ashes. The enraged inhabitants, aided by the Danes, took advantage of the confusion to attack the castle, which they carried by assault, and put the garrison, consisting of three thousand men, to the sword. This success gave the signal for the inhabitants of many other parts of England to show their hatred of the Normans. Hereward, a noble of East Anglia, assembled a considerable force, and taking a position on the island of Ely, made successful incursions in the country round him. The English, in the counties of Somerset and Dorset, rose in arms and assaulted the castle of Montacute, while the warlike inhabitants of Cornwall and Devon laid siege to Exeter, which, from a grateful recollection of the clemency William had shown them, remained faithful to his interests. Edric the Forester laid siege to Shrewsbury, and made head against Count Brian and Fitz-Osborn. In short, the whole nation rose, like a man suddenly awakened from a dream, and seemed resolved to atone for the abjectness of its previous submission by a vigorous and well-organised resistance to its oppressors.

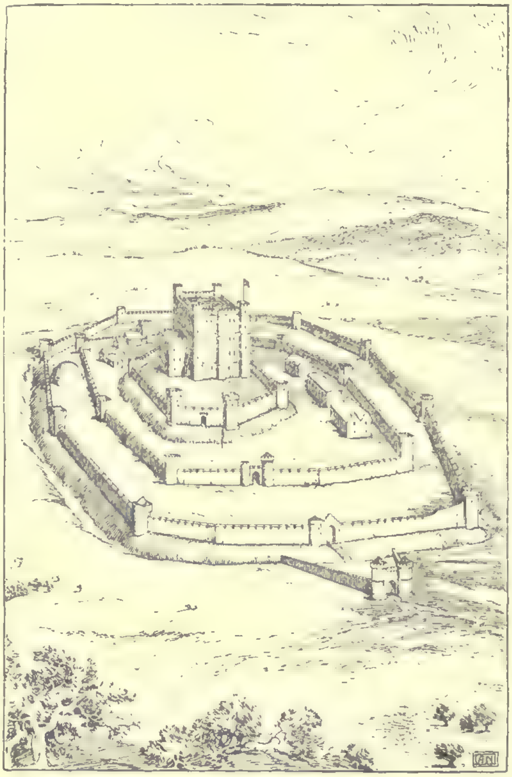
William, however, appeared undismayed by the storm lowering on every side around him. Calling his army together, he marched rapidly towards the north, where the rebellion appeared the most formidable, knowing that a defeat there would strike terror into the rest of the insurgents. Joining policy with force, he made a separate treaty with the Danes, offering them, as the price of their withdrawal into Denmark, permission to plunder and ravage the sea-coasts. Cospatrick also, despairing of success, paid to the Conqueror a large sum to be received once more into favour; he was afterwards invested with the earldom of Northumberland as the price of his submission. The King of Scotland arrived too late with his succours, and found himself obliged to retire; and all the insurgents in various parts of the country either dispersed or laid down their arms, with the exception of the East Anglian noble Hereward, who still kept possession of the island of Ely. Edgar Atheling, finding himself unsupported, withdrew with his followers and friends once more into Scotland; and the kingdom, without any great battle being fought, once more submitted to the iron yoke of the Normans. Sensible of the restless disposition of the Northumbrians, William determined to incapacitate them ever after from giving disturbance; and he issued orders for laying entirely waste that fertile country, which for the extent of sixty miles lies between the Humber and the Tees. The houses were reduced to ashes by the merciless Normans; the cattle seized and driven away; the instruments of husbandry destroyed; and the inhabitants were compelled either to seek for subsistence in the southern parts of Scotland, or, if they lingered in England from a reluctance to abandon their ancient habitations, perished miserably in the woods from cold and hunger. The lives of 100,000 persons are computed to have been sacrificed to this stroke of barbarous policy, which, by seeking a remedy for a temporary evil, thus inflicted a lasting wound on the power and opulence of the nation. The subjugation of the English was completed by the conquest of Chester.

William next proceeded to replace Englishmen in the church by Normans. Amongst the English churchmen was Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury, a man who by the greatness of his birth, the extent of his possessions, and the dignity of his office, was marked out as the first victim.

Not deeming it safe to violate the respect due to the primate, William waited the arrival of the Bishop of Sion, the legate of the Pope in England. It was not deference to the see of Rome alone which induced William to receive the Papal envoy, but the desire of using him for a political purpose which he had long meditated; and the legate consented to become the supporter of his tyranny. He summoned, therefore, a council of the prelates and abbots at Winchester; and being assisted by two cardinals, Peter and John, he cited before him Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury, to answer for his conduct. The primate was accused of three crimes: the holding of the see of Winchester, together with that of Canterbury; the officiating in the pall of Robert, his predecessor; and the having received his own pall from Benedict IX., who was afterwards deposed for simony, and for intrusion into the Papacy. These crimes of Stigand were mere pretences, since the first had been a practice not unusual in England, and was never anywhere subjected to a higher penalty than a resignation of one of the sees; the second was a pure ceremonial; and as Benedict was the only pope who then officiated, and his acts were never repealed, all the prelates of the Church, especially those who lived at a distance, were excusable for making their applications to him. Stigand's ruin, however, was resolved on, and was prosecuted with great severity. The legate degraded him from his dignity; the king confiscated his estate, and cast him into prison, where he continued in poverty and want during the remainder of his life.

Like rigour was exercised against the other English prelates. Ethelric, Bishop of Selsey, and Ethelmer, of East Anglia, were deposed by the legate, and imprisoned by the king. Many considerable abbots shared the same fate: Ethelwine, Bishop of Durham, fled the kingdom. Wulstan, of Worcester, a man of inoffensive character, was the only English prelate that escaped this general proscription. Brompton relates that the last-named bishop was also deprived of his dignities by the synod; but refusing to deliver his pastoral staff and ring to any but the person from whom he first received it, he went immediately to King Edward's tomb, and struck the staff so deeply into the stone that none but himself was able to pull it out; on which he was allowed to retain possession of his dignity. Aldred, Archbishop of York, who had crowned the Conqueror, died about the same time. He left his malediction, it is said, to William, on account of the wrongs he had inflicted on the people. The deposing of Stigand gave the king an opportunity of paying a long debt of gratitude to Lanfranc, a Lombard priest, by raising him to the vacant dignity. This abbot had been sent by him shortly after his marriage with Matilda to the court of Rome, to obtain the Papal dispensation for their union, it having been discovered, after the ceremony had taken place, that they were related within the prohibited degrees. The new archbishop showed himself exceedingly unbending where the prerogatives of the primacy were in question. After a long contest before the Pope, he compelled Thomas, a Norman monk, who had been appointed to the see of York, to acknowledge his superiority, a point which had hitherto been warmly contested between the occupants of the rival sees. The zeal of the new primate in supporting the interests of Rome met with great success. It is true that William, during his reign, rarely felt inconvenience from it, for with his strong hand and iron will he kept the Church in subjection to the Crown, and would allow none to dispute his sovereign will and pleasure. He prohibited his subjects from acknowledging any one for Pope whom he himself had not previously received: he required that all the ecclesiastical canons, voted in any synod, should first be laid before him, and be ratified by his authority; even bulls, or letters from Rome, could not legally be produced, till they received the same sanction; and none of his ministers or barons, whatever offences they were guilty of, could be subjected to spiritual censures till he himself had given his consent to their excommunication; also, while agreeing that the tax on every house, known as Peter's pence, should be paid to the Pope, William proudly refused to do him homage.

In order to secure the subjection of his new subjects, the Conqueror did not neglect the important means which the erection of castles or fortresses presented. Amongst others, he either built, or caused his chief vassals to build, those of Pevensey, Hastings, and the White Tower of London. The castles, or stone-built fortresses of England, previous to the Conquest, were few and inconsiderable. Those erected by the Romans had fallen into ruin; and although Alfred the Great had strengthened the defences of the country by upwards of fifty towers of defence, they had not been kept up by his successors; and to this neglect the speedy reduction of the country to the Norman yoke may, in a large measure, be attributed. There were no long and wearisome sieges to undertake; no position capable of holding an army in check for any length of time: all was left to the chance of an open battle.



PLAN OF A NORMAN CASTLE. (*J. C. Dudley.*)

At the period previous to the Conquest, the castles and places of strength were chiefly of wood. William determined to alter this, and speedily commenced the erection of his strongholds, and in process of time the great feudal barons followed his example.

In order to afford an idea of these structures, we shall, as briefly as possible, give a general idea of a Norman fortress or castle. It consisted of an enclosure, varying, according to the importance of its position, of from five to ten acres of land, and, where circumstances rendered it possible, was surrounded by a moat or artificial canal, on the edge of which was a strong wall enclosing a second wall. Between these was the first ballium, or outer court. Within the second wall, which surrounded the keep, or great tower, were storehouses for the garrison, and other offices, as well as lodgings for the troops. In the centre of the interior space stood the citadel, keep, or master tower, in which resided the governor, or feudal possessor; in his absence, the castellan inhabited it, exercising the same authority as his chief. This last edifice was generally erected on an artificial or natural mound. It contained the state apartments, together with the domestic offices, and, in the centre, below the foundations, the dungeons for prisoners of war and other captives, such as felons, who had fallen under the jurisdiction of the lord or governor. In many instances there were secret means of access to these prisons by narrow passages contrived in the walls. In advance of the moat stood the barbican, or outward defence, with a watch-tower, communicating with the interior by means of a drawbridge, which drew up from within, so as to be under the direction of the sentinel or guard. The entrance to the ballium, or outward court, was still further secured by a strong gate, defended by a portcullis, to be raised or lowered as occasion required, by means of strong iron chains and pulleys. The walls were further protected by battlements, perforated by loopholes, through which arrows could be discharged, and towers were planted at various distances. The outward walls were seldom less than seven feet in thickness, and those of the keep frequently as many as fifteen. Before the discovery of gunpowder and the invention of artillery, these strongholds might be considered impregnable; and when taken it was generally by famine, or through the treachery of some portion of the garrison. Figuratively speaking, they were so many Norman bridles to check the impatience of the half-broken English steed. The English had now the mortification to find that as William's authority increased it was employed in their oppression; that the scheme of subjection had been craftily planned, and was being relentlessly carried out, attended by every circumstance of indignity and insult calculated to wound the pride of a susceptible people.

The position of the two Earls Morcar and Edwin soon became intolerable; for, notwithstanding that they had stood aloof during the last insurrection of their countrymen, and maintained their allegiance, William treated them with disrespect; and the hungry adventurers who surrounded his court, while they envied the possessions of the English nobles, thought themselves entitled to despise them as slaves and barbarians. Sensible that with the loss of their dignity they had no longer any hope of safety, they determined, though too late, to assert the independence of their country. With this intention Edwin fled, but was killed while so doing; whilst his brother Morcar took refuge with the gallant Hereward, who still maintained himself in the Isle of Ely. The king, with his usual vigour, determined to subdue their stronghold; and for this purpose he caused a large number of flat-bottomed boats to be constructed, on which he placed his men, and surrounded it. He next caused a road to be made through the morass, two miles in length, and after a desperate attack obliged the English to surrender in 1071. Hereward, however, contrived to escape, by cutting his way, sword in hand, through the enemy, and carried on the war by sea against the Normans with such success, that William was glad to compromise with him by giving him back his estate and honours. The memory of Hereward, "England's darling," as he was called by his countrymen, long remained cherished in their hearts, and the exploits of the last hero of English independence were for many years a favourite theme of tradition and poetry.

The King of Scotland, in hopes of profiting by these convulsions, had fallen on the northern counties, but on the approach of William he retired; and when Malcolm re-entered his country he was glad to make peace, and to pay the usual homage to the English crown. To complete the Norman king's prosperity, Edgar Atheling himself, despairing of the success of his cause, and weary of a fugitive life, submitted to his enemy; and, receiving a decent pension for his subsistence, was permitted to live in England unmolested. But these acts of generosity towards the leaders were contrasted, as usual, by William's rigour against the inferior malcontents. He ordered the hands to be lopped off, and the eyes to be put out, of many of the prisoners whom he had taken in the Isle of Ely, and he dispersed them in that miserable condition throughout the country as monuments of his severity.

His attention was then turned to France. Herbert, the last count or chief of the province of Maine, bordering on Normandy, had bequeathed his lands to William, who had taken possession of them several years before the invasion of England. In 1073, the people of Maine, instigated by Fulk, Count of Anjou, rose in rebellion against William, and expelled the magistrates he had placed over them. The settled aspect of affairs in England afforded him leisure to punish this insult to his authority; but being unwilling to remove his Norman forces from the island, he carried over a considerable army, composed almost entirely of English; and joining them to some troops levied in Normandy, he entered the revolted province. The national valour, which had been so long opposed to him, was now exerted in his favour. Signal success attended the expedition. The men of Maine were beaten by the English, many towns and villages were destroyed, and the inhabitants tendered their submission to the Conqueror.

But during these transactions (1074) the government of England was greatly disturbed, and that too by those very foreigners who owed everything to the king's bounty, and whose rapacious disposition he had tried in vain to satisfy. The Norman barons who had engaged with their duke in the conquest of England were men of independent spirit and strong will; and however implicit the obedience which they yielded to their leader in the field, it is possible that in more peaceful times they found it difficult to brook the imperious character and overbearing temper of the king. The discontent became general. Roger, Earl of Hereford, the son and heir of Fitz-Osborn, so long the intimate friend and counsellor of the king, had negotiated the marriage of his sister with Ralph the Wader, Earl of Norfolk. For some reason, now unknown, the alliance was displeasing to the king, who sent from Normandy to forbid it. The two earls, despite the prohibition, proceeded to solemnise the union; and, foreseeing the resentment of William, prepared for a revolt.

NORMAN AND SAXON ARMS.

It was during the festivities of the nuptials that they broached their design to their numerous friends and allies assembled on the occasion, by complaining of the tyranny of the king; his oppressive conduct to the unfortunate English, whom they affected to pity; his insolence to men of noble blood; and the indignity of submitting any longer to be governed by a prince of illegitimate birth. All present, inflamed with resentment, shared in the indignation of the speakers, and a solemn compact was entered into to shake off the royal yoke. Even Earl Waltheof, who was present, expressed his approval of the conspiracy, and promised to assist it.

This noble was the last of the English who possessed any great power or influence in the kingdom. After his capitulation at York, he was received into favour by the Conqueror; had even married Judith, his niece; and had been promoted to the earldom of Nottingham. Cospatrick, Earl of Northumberland, having, on some new disgust from William, retired into Scotland—where he received the earldom of Dunbar from the bounty of Malcolm—Waltheof was appointed his successor in that important command, and seemed still to possess the confidence and friendship of his sovereign; but as he was a man of generous principles, and loved his country, it is probable that the tyranny exercised over the English lay heavy on his mind, and destroyed all the satisfaction which he could reap from his own grandeur and advancement. When a prospect, therefore, was opened of retrieving their liberty, he hastily embraced it; but after his cool judgment returned, he foresaw that the conspiracy of those discontented barons was not likely to prove successful against the established power of William; or, if it did, that the slavery of the English, instead of being alleviated by that event, would become more grievous under a multitude of foreign leaders, factious and ambitious, whose union or discord would be equally oppressive. Tormented with these reflections, he disclosed the plans of the conspirators to his wife Judith, of whose fidelity he entertained no suspicion; but who took this opportunity of ruining her confiding husband. She conveyed intelligence of the conspiracy to the king, and aggravated every circumstance which she believed would tend to incense him against Waltheof, and render him absolutely implacable. Meanwhile the earl, still dubious with regard to the part which he should act, discovered the secret in confession to Lanfranc, on whose probity and judgment he placed great reliance. He was persuaded by that prelate that he owed no fidelity to those rebellious barons, who had by surprise gained his consent to a crime;

that his first duty was to his sovereign and benefactor, his next to himself and his family; and that, if he seized not the opportunity of making atonement for his guilt by revealing it, the temerity of the conspirators was so great, that they might give some other person the means of acquiring the merit of the discovery.

Waltheof, convinced by these arguments, went at once to Normandy, where William was then residing, and confessed everything to the king, who, dissembling his resentment, thanked him for his loyalty and love, but in his heart gave the earl no thanks for a confidence which came so late.

The conspirators, hearing of Waltheof's departure from England, concluded at once that they were betrayed, and instantly assembled in arms before their plans were ripe for execution, and before the arrival of the Danes, with whom they had secretly entered into an alliance. The Earl of Hereford was defeated by Walter de Lacy, who, supported by the Bishop of Worcester and the Abbot of Evesham, prevented him from passing the Severn, and penetrating into the heart of the kingdom. The Earl of Norfolk was defeated by Odo, the warlike Bishop of Bayeux, who sullied his victory by commanding the right foot of his prisoners to be cut off as a punishment for their treason. Their leader escaped to Norwich, and from thence to Denmark.

William, on his arrival in England, found that he had nothing left to do but punish the instigators and leaders of the revolt, which he did with rigour. Many were hanged; some had their eyes put out; others had their hands cut off, or were otherwise horribly mutilated. The only indulgence he showed was to the Earl of Hereford, who was condemned to lose his estate, and to be kept a prisoner during pleasure. The king appeared willing to remit the last part of the sentence, probably from the recollection of his father's services, and the dread of increasing the discontent of the Norman barons; but the haughty and unbending spirit of the earl provoked William to extend the sentence to a perpetual confinement.

Waltheof, being an Englishman, was not treated with so much humanity; though his guilt, always much inferior to that of the other conspirators, was atoned for by an early repentance. William, instigated by his niece Judith, as well as by his rapacious courtiers, who longed for the forfeiture of so rich an estate, ordered the thane to be tried, condemned, and executed. The English, who considered Waltheof as the last hope of their nation, grievously lamented his fate, and fancied that miracles were wrought by his relics, as a testimony of his innocence and sanctity.

Nothing remained to complete William's satisfaction but the punishment of Ralph the Wader and he hastened over to Normandy in order to gratify his vengeance on that criminal; but though the contest seemed very unequal between a private nobleman and the King of England, Ralph was so well supported both by the Count of Brittany and the King of France, that William, after besieging him for some time in Dol, was obliged to abandon the enterprise, and make with those powerful princes a peace in which Ralph himself was included. England, during his absence, remained in tranquillity, and nothing remarkable occurred, except two ecclesiastical synods, which were summoned, one at London, another at Winchester. In one of these the precedency among the episcopal sees was settled, and the seat of some of them was removed from small villages to the most considerable town within the diocese.

William to the end of his reign no longer had any serious difficulties to contend with from the English, the national spirit being broken and subdued beneath his iron yoke. The conspiracies which ensued were now those of the Normans, and the partial insurrections that took place were instigated chiefly by private vengeance against some local oppressor.

In one of these insurrections perished Walcher, Bishop of Durham, a prelate originally from Lorraine, and elevated by the new king to the see of St. Cuthbert. Historians who have written of this remarkable man agree in describing him as no less distinguished for his attainments than for the excellence of his moral character: he was good but feeble, and lacked the energy necessary to restrain the evil-doers in the troublesome times in which he lived. His tragic death is said to have been predicted by the widow of Edward the Confessor, who resided at Winchester, where the bishop was consecrated. When she saw him conducted in pomp to the cathedral, struck by his venerable air and majestic demeanour, she exclaimed to those around her, "Behold a noble martyr!"

On the death of Waltheof, the government of Northumberland was confided by William to this venerable prelate, who thus united in his hands the temporal as well as the spiritual power. He promptly devoted himself to the restoration of monasteries throughout the diocese.

His own disposition being good, he suspected no ill in others; and giving much time to study, delegated a large share of his authority to one Gilbert, a relation, an ecclesiastic of ardent character, who committed great crimes and exactions, and permitted the soldiers to pillage and slay the inhabitants of the diocese without listening to their prayers for redress. It was in vain that the good bishop tried to temper the harshness of this man by associating with him his archdeacon, one Leobwine, who sided with Gilbert in all his exactions; or took to his councils a noble Englishman, Ligulf, uncle to the deceased Waltheof. The two tyrants disregarded the remonstrances of Ligulf, and continued their career of crime and oppression. At length Leobwine, enraged at Ligulf's expostulations, demanded his life of his confederate Gilbert, who entered the house of the Saxon, and slew him with most of his followers.

The murdered man not only held vast possessions, but was highly esteemed on account of the justness of his character; and the crime aroused such unusual indignation that the people, excited by his relatives and friends, flew to arms, demanding vengeance on the criminals. The bishop, in an agony of fear, sent messengers to say that justice should be done; that he should place out of the pale of the law Gilbert and his accomplices; that he himself was innocent of the death of Ligulf, and offered to purge himself by oath of all suspicion of the deed. This offer was accepted, and the two parties met at a church near Durham, a ferocious and armed multitude on one side, frantic for vengeance. They had seen, they said, the assassins received and sheltered in the episcopal palace directly after the commission of the crime.

WALTHEOF'S CONFESSION. (*See p. 115.*)

Walcher, alarmed by their cries, refused to trust himself amongst them, but offered to take the oath in the church, where he was surrounded, together with the actual murderers. In the midst of the tumult, the Saxon cry of "Short rede—good rede," signifying "Short words—good words," was raised, and their leader called out, "Slay the bishop!" The multitude, delighted with the order, rushed to the sacred edifice, and attempted to set it on fire. In this peril the prelate commanded Gilbert, who had actually committed the offence, to quit the church, lest, as he said, the innocent should perish with the guilty; he obeyed, and was speedily torn in pieces by the English. Leobwine refused to quit the place, which he vainly hoped would shelter him, although the flames had begun to penetrate in every part. Then it was the bishop took the resolution of quitting the building, in the hope that the lives of his companions might be spared. Covering his face with his mantle, he advanced amongst the crowd, but soon fell, pierced by a hundred wounds. Leobwine, and those who were with him, perished in the flames.

Excited by this success, the insurgents returned to Durham, and attempted to become masters of the citadel of the murdered bishop; but the garrison, which was composed of Normans, beat them off, and they dispersed themselves in the neighbouring country.

No sooner did the report of this insurrection reach the ears of Odo, the grand justiciary of the kingdom, than he marched towards Durham with a strong body of men to restore order. Incensed at the death of his brother prelate, he gave licence to his soldiery to ravage and destroy. The horrors that ensued were fearful. Whenever an Englishman was met with he was put to death, with circumstances of appalling barbarity. This scene of horrors took place in 1080, and fell with double hardship on the inhabitants, who had not yet recovered from the incursion which Malcolm, King of Scotland, had made a short time previously in the province.

William resolved to chastise the Scots once more, and for that purpose entrusted the command of an expedition to his eldest son Robert. But on the arrival of the prince in Northumbria, he no longer found an enemy to oppose him, Malcolm and his troops having retired into their own country. The only result, therefore, of the enterprise was the founding of the town of Newcastle upon the banks of the river Tyne.

The following year the king marched into Wales in person, with numerous forces, and overran a considerable portion of the country, delivering, in the course of his progress, upwards of 300 English, whom the Welsh had enslaved. From this excursion he was speedily recalled by a confederacy entered into against him by the Danes, whose king, Canute the Younger, laid claim to the crown of England, and with this intention entered into an alliance with Olaf, King of Norway, and with his brother-in-law Robert, Count of Flanders, who promised him a succour of 600 vessels. William felt the utmost alarm at this alliance, which seriously menaced his throne, and he enlisted under his banners a crowd of mercenaries from every part of Europe, whom he paid by the enormous contributions wrung from his English subjects. The Danish invasion, however, never took place, through the death of Canute and dissensions among the other leaders.

Although released from external menaces, it was not permitted to the Conqueror to enjoy repose in the last years of his eventful reign. Ordericus Vitalis, in speaking of him, says, "He was afflicted by the just judgment of God. Since the death of Waltheof, whom he had so unjustly punished, he had neither repose nor peace, and the astonishing course of his success was poisoned by the troubles which those related to him occasioned."

When William first received the submission of the province of Maine, he had promised the inhabitants that his eldest son Robert should be their prince, and before he undertook the expedition against England he had, on the application of the French court, declared him his successor in Normandy, and had obliged the barons of that duchy to do him homage as their future sovereign. By this artifice, he had endeavoured to appease the jealousy of his neighbours, as affording them a prospect of separating England from his dominions on the Continent; but when Robert demanded of him the execution of those engagements, he gave him an absolute refusal, and told him, according to the homely saying, that he never intended to throw off his clothes till he went to bed. Robert openly declared his discontent; and was suspected of secretly instigating the King of France and the Count of Brittany to the opposition which they made to William, and which had formerly frustrated his attempts on the town of Dol; and, as the quarrel still augmented, Robert proceeded to entertain a strong jealousy of his two surviving brothers, William and Henry (for Richard was killed in 1081, while hunting, by a stag), who by greater submission and complaisance had acquired the affections of their father. In this disposition on both sides, a small matter sufficed to produce a rupture between them.

The three princes residing with their father in the castle of l'Aigle in Normandy, were one day engaged in sport together; and after some mirth and jollity, the two younger threw some water over Robert, as he passed through the court on leaving their apartment—a frolic which he would naturally have regarded as innocent, had it not been for the suggestions of Alberic de Græntmesnil. This young man persuaded the prince that the act was meant as a public affront, which it behoved him in honour to resent; and the choleric Robert, drawing his sword, ran upstairs, with an intention of taking revenge on his brothers. The whole castle was filled with tumult, which the king himself, who hastened from his apartment, found some difficulty in appeasing. He could by no means calm the resentment of his eldest son, who, complaining of his father's partiality, and fancying that no proper atonement had been made for the insult, left the court that very evening, and hastened to Rouen with the intention of seizing the citadel of that place. Disappointed in this attempt by the precaution and vigilance of Roger of Ivry, the governor, he fled to Hugh of Neufchatel, a powerful Norman baron, who gave him protection in his castles; and he levied war openly against his father. The popular character of the prince, and a similarity of manners, engaged all the young nobility of Normandy and Maine, as well as of Anjou and Brittany, to take part with him; and it was suspected that Matilda, his mother, whose favourite he was, supported him in his rebellion by secret remittances of money, which so enraged her husband that, despite the affection he is known to have borne her, he is said to have beaten her with his own hand.

All the hereditary provinces of William were convulsed by this war, and he was at last compelled to draw an army from England to assist him. These forces, led by his ancient captains, soon enabled him to drive Robert and his adherents from their strongholds, and re-establish his authority; the rebellious son himself being driven to seek a retreat in the castle of Gerberoi, which the King of France, who had secretly fomented these dissensions, placed at his disposal. In this fortress he was closely besieged by his angry father, and many encounters took place in the sorties made by the garrison. In one of these Robert engaged the king without knowing him, wounded him in the arm, and unhorsed him. On William calling out for assistance, his son recognised his voice, and, filled with horror at the idea of having so nearly become a parricide, threw himself at his feet, and asked pardon for his offences. So says Florence of Worcester, while other accounts represent William as having been rescued by his attendants. The entreaties of the queen, and other influences, soon afterwards brought about a reconciliation; but it is thought the Conqueror in his heart never forgave his son, although he afterwards took Robert to England. This occurred previous to the expedition recorded on the preceding page, in which he sent his son to oppose the King of Scotland.

The tranquillity which now ensued gave William leisure to begin an undertaking which proves the comprehensive nature of his talents. This was a general survey of all the lands in the kingdom in 1081; their extent in each district; their proprietors, tenures, value; the quantity of meadow, pasture, wood, and arable land which they contained; and in some counties the number of tenants, cottagers, and slaves of all denominations who lived on them. He appointed commissioners for this purpose, who entered every particular in their register by the verdict of juries, and after a labour of six years (for the work was so long in finishing), brought him an exact account of all the landed property in England. This monument, called Domesday Book—the most valuable piece of antiquity possessed by any nation—is still preserved in the Exchequer. It was followed by a great Witenagemot at Salisbury, attended, it is said, by some sixty thousand men, who all swore obedience to the king "against all other men."

William, in common with all the great men of the time, was passionately addicted to the chase; a pastime he indulged in at the expense of his unhappy subjects. Not content with the royal domains, he resolved to make a new forest near Winchester, his usual place of abode, and for this purpose laid waste a tract of country extending above thirty miles, expelling the inhabitants from their houses, and seizing on their property, without affording them the least compensation; neither did he respect the churches and convents—the possessions of the clergy as well as laity being alike confiscated to his pleasures. At the same time he enacted penalties more severe than had hitherto been known in England, against hunting in any of the royal forests. The killing of a deer, wild boar, or hare, was punished by the loss of the offender's eyes—and that at a time when the slaying of a fellow-creature might be atoned by the payment of a fine. The death of William's son Richard there, and afterwards of William Rufus, were regarded as judgments from heaven for the sacrilege committed in the making of the forest.

The transactions recorded during the remainder of this reign may be considered more as domestic occurrences which concern the prince, than as national events which regard England. Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, the king's uterine brother, whom he had created Earl of Kent, and entrusted with a great share of power during his whole reign, had amassed immense riches; and, agreeably to the usual progress of human wishes, he began to regard his present acquisitions as but a step to further grandeur. He had formed the chimerical project of buying the papacy; and though Gregory, the reigning pope, was not of advanced years, the prelate had confided so much

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR GRANTING
A CHARTER TO THE CITIZENS OF LONDON.

From the Wall Painting by J. Seymour Lucas, R.A.,
in the Royal Exchange

in the predictions of an astrologer, that he reckoned on the pontiff's death, and on attaining, by his own intrigues and money, that envied state of greatness. Resolving, therefore, to go to Italy with something like an army, he had persuaded many barons, and among the rest Hugh, Earl of Chester, to take the same course, in hopes that when he should mount the Papal throne, he would bestow on them more considerable establishments in that country. The king, from whom all these projects had been carefully concealed, at last got intelligence of the design, and ordered Odo to be arrested. His officers, from respect to the immunities which the ecclesiastics now assumed, scrupled to execute the command, till the king himself was obliged in person to seize him; and when Odo insisted that he was a prelate, and exempt from all temporal jurisdiction, William replied that he arrested him not as Bishop of Bayeux, but as Earl of Kent. He was sent prisoner to Normandy, and, notwithstanding the remonstrances and menaces of Gregory, was kept in confinement during the remainder of William's reign.

William was detained upon the Continent some time after this affair by a quarrel which, in 1087, broke out between himself and his suzerain the King of France, concerning the possession of the border district called the Vexin. His displeasure was also increased by some railleries which had been thrown out against his person. The king had grown remarkably stout, and been detained for some time on a bed of sickness. Philip, hearing of this, expressed his surprise that his brother of England should be so long at his lying-in, but that no doubt there would be a fine churching when he was delivered. The Conqueror, enraged at the insulting jest, sent him word that, as soon as he was up, he would be churched in Notre Dame, and present so many lights—alluding to the Catholic custom—as would give little pleasure to the King of France. Immediately on his recovery he kept his word; for, gathering an army, he led his forces into L'Isle de France, laying everything waste with fire and sword in his passage, and took the town of Mantes, which he reduced to ashes.

This career of conquest, however, was cut short by an accident which afterwards cost William his life. His horse starting on a sudden, caused him to bruise his stomach severely against the pommel of his saddle. Being advanced in years, he began to apprehend the consequences, and ordered himself to be conveyed to the monastery of St. Gervais in Rouen. Finding his end approaching, he perceived the vanity of all human greatness, and began to feel the most bitter remorse of conscience for the cruelties he had practised, the desolation he had caused, and the innocent blood he had shed during his reign in England; and by way of atonement gave great gifts to various monasteries. He also commanded that Earl Morcar and other English prisoners should be set at liberty. He was now prevailed upon, though not without reluctance, to release his brother Odo, against whom he was terribly incensed.

He left Normandy and Maine to his eldest son Robert, whom he had never forgiven for his rebellion against him. He wrote to Lanfranc, the primate, desiring him to crown William King of England, and bequeathed to his son Henry five thousand pounds of silver, foretelling, it is said, that he would one day surpass both his brothers in greatness.

He died at Rouen, on the 9th of September, 1087, in the sixty-first year of his age, the twenty-first of his reign over England, and fifty-second over Normandy. Early in the morning the king heard the sound of a bell, and eagerly demanded what it meant. He was told that it sounded the hour of prime in the church of St. Mary. "Then," said he, "I commend my soul to my Lady, the mother of God, that by her holy prayers she may reconcile me to her son, my Lord Jesus Christ," and immediately expired.

From the events which followed the reader may judge of the unsettled nature of the time. The knights and prelates hastened to their respective homes to secure their property; the citizens of Rouen began to conceal their most valuable effects; the servants rifled the palace, and hurried away with the booty; and the royal corpse for three hours lay almost in a state of nudity on the ground. At length the archbishop ordered the body to be interred at Caen; and Herlwin, a neighbouring knight, out of compassion, conveyed it at his own expense to that city.

At the day appointed for the interment, Prince Henry, the Norman prelates, and a multitude of clergy and people, assembled in the church of St. Stephen, which the Conqueror had founded. The mass had been performed, the corpse was placed on the bier, and the Bishop of Evreux had pronounced the panegyric of the deceased, when a voice from the crowd exclaimed, "He whom you have praised was a robber. The very land on which you stand is mine. By violence he took it from my father; and in the name of God I forbid

ROBERT ASKING HIS FATHER'S PARDON. (*See p.* 118.)

you to bury him in it." The speaker was Ascelin Fitz-Arthur, who had often, but fruitlessly, sought reparation from the justice of William. After some debate the prelates called him to them, paid him sixty shillings for the grave, and promised that he should receive the full value of his land. The ceremony was then continued, and the body of the king deposited in a coffin of stone.

William's character has been drawn with apparent impartiality in the Saxon Chronicle by a contemporary and an Englishman. That the reader may learn the opinion of one who possessed the means of forming an accurate judgment, we have transcribed the passage, retaining, as far as it may be intelligible, the phraseology of the original:—

"If any one wish to know what manner of man he was, or what worship he had, or of how many lands he were the lord, we will describe him as we have known him; for we looked on him, and some time lived in his herd. King William was a very wise man, and very rich, more worshipful and strong than any of his fore-gangers. He was mild to good men who loved God, and stark [stiff] beyond all bounds to those who withstaid his will. On the very stede [place] where God gave him to win England, he reared a noble monastery and set monks therein, and endowed it well. He was very worshipful. Thrice he bore his king-helmet every year when he was in England; at Easter he bore it at Winchester, at Pentecost at Westminster, and in mid-winter at Gloucester: and there were with him all the rich men all over England, archbishops and diocesan bishops, abbots and earls, thanes and knights. Moreover, he was a very stark man, and very savage; so that no man durst do anything against his will. He had earls in his bonds, who had done against his will; bishops he set off their bishoprics, abbots off their abbotries, and thanes in prison; and at last he did not spare his own brother Odo. Him he set in prison. Yet, among other things, we must not forget the good frith [peace] which he made in this land, so that a man that was good for aught might travel over the kingdom with his bosom full of gold without molestation; and no man durst slay another man, though he had suffered never so mickle evil from the other. He ruled over England; and by his

FITZ-ARTHUR FORBIDDING THE BURIAL OF WILLIAM. (*See p.* 119.)

cunning he was so thoroughly acquainted with it, that there is not a hide [a measure varying from 60 to 120 acres] of land of which he did not know both who had it, and what was its worth, and that he set down in his writings. Wales was under his wield, and therein he wrought castles: and he wielded the Isle of Man withal: and moreover, he subdued Scotland by his mickle strength. Normandy was his by kinn: and over the earldom called Mans he ruled; and if he might have lived yet two years, he would have won Ireland by the fame of his power, and without any armament. Yet, truly, in his time men had mickle suffering, and very many hardships. Castles he caused to be wrought, and poor men to be oppressed. He was so very stark. He took from his subjects many marks of gold, and many hundred pounds of silver; and that he took, some by right, and some by mickle might, for very little need. He had fallen into avarice, and greediness he loved withal. He let his lands to fine [money payment] as dear as he could; then came some other and bade more than the first had given, and the king let it to him who bade more. Then came a third and bid yet more, and the king let it into the hands of the man who bade the most. Nor did he reck how sinfully his reeves [bailiffs] got money of poor men, or how many unlawful things they did. For the more men talked of right law, the more they did against the law. He also set many deer friths [forests]; and he made laws therewith, that whosoever should slay hart or hind, him man should blind. As he forbade the slaying of harts, so also did he of boars. So much he loved the high deer, as if he had been their father. He also decreed about hares, that they should go free. His rich men moaned, and the poor men murmured; but he was so hard that he recked not the hatred of them all. For it was need they should follow the king's will withal, if they wished to live, or have lands or goods, or his favour. Alas, that any man should be so moody, and should so puff up himself, and think himself above all other men! May Almighty God have mercy on his soul, and grant him forgiveness of his sins!"

The king was of ordinary stature, but inclined to corpulency. His countenance wore an air of ferocity, which, when he was agitated by passion, struck terror into every beholder. The story told of his strength at one period of his life almost exceeds belief. It is said that, sitting on horseback, he could draw the string of a bow which no other man could bend even on foot.

Harsh and repulsive in its main features though the government of William was, it was of great service to England, in that it was firm and equal. The Conqueror would allow no one to oppress but himself; and so the country was spared the establishment of petty baronial tyrants throughout the land, with the necessary accompaniments of private warfare and constant rebellion. The English, on the other hand, were taught by the great Witena-gemot at Salisbury to look to the sovereign, not to any local potentate, for redress of wrongs; it was upon them that William relied when it was necessary to chastise the rebellious adventurers who had accompanied him across the channel. His rules of law were not inequitably fitted to the wants of a mixed population, and beneath their iron discipline the nation educated itself by suffering, and learnt to become united and self-reliant. The Church also gained considerably by his reforms. Its provincialism was corrected, and it was brought in contact with western Christendom. The establishment of the supremacy of Canterbury over York was also a great step in the direction of ordered ecclesiastical government. At the same time, as we have seen, both papal and ecclesiastical pretentions were carefully kept in check, and during the Conqueror's reign no collisions between Church and State disturbed the peace of the realm. His establishment of separate ecclesiastical courts to try ecclesiastical cases threw open the door to many abuses, which, however, did not come to a head until the time of Henry II. It may be mentioned, by the way, that the word Conqueror was not used in those times in its present acceptance, but meant "The Gainer." William invariably professed to regard himself not as a usurper, but as a lawful heir to the English throne.

King William had issue, besides his three sons who survived him, five daughters, namely—1. Cicely, a nun in the monastery of Fécamp, afterwards abbess in the Holy Trinity at Caen, where she died in 1127. 2. Constantia, married to Alan Fergent, Count of Brittany: she died without issue. 3. Alice, contracted to Harold. 4. Adela, married to Stephen, Earl of Blois, by whom she had four sons—William, Theobald, Henry, and Stephen—of whom the eldest was neglected on account of the imbecility of his understanding. 5. Agatha, who died a virgin, but was betrothed to the King of Galicia: she died on her journey thither, before she joined her bridegroom.

CHAPTER XIII.

REIGN OF WILLIAM II.

William's Surname—How he obtained the Throne—Rising in favour of his Brother, Robert—Bishop Odo's Ill-fortune—Surrender of Rochester Castle—Flight of Odo—Failure of the Conspiracy—Death of Lanfranc—William's Misrule—Randolf the Firebrand—Appointment of Anselm to Canterbury—Rufus invades Normandy—Treaty between the Brothers—Siege of Mount St. Michael—Malcolm Canmore's Inroad into England—Building of Castle at Carlisle—Death of Malcolm—Illness of William—His Treachery towards Robert—Welsh Marauders—Earl Mowbray's Hard Fortune—The King's Exactions—He obtains possession of Normandy—The Hunt in the New Forest—Death of the Red King.

WILLIAM, whose surname of Rufus was derived from the ruddiness of his countenance, no sooner found himself in possession of his father's letter to the primate Lanfranc, than he fled from the monastery of St. Gervais, where William was dying, and hastened to England, in order to secure possession of the crown.

Sensible that an act so opposed to the laws of primogeniture and the feudal rights might meet with great opposition from the nobles, he trusted to his celerity for success, and reached the kingdom before the news of the king's death arrived. Pretending orders from the dead monarch, he secured the strong fortresses of Dover, Pevensey, and Hastings. On his arrival a council of prelates and barons was summoned to proceed to the election of a sovereign. Robert, who would naturally be chosen, and his partisans, were in Normandy, while William and his adherents were on the spot. Besides, Archbishop Lanfranc, who felt himself bound to obey the last injunction of his benefactor William, exerted the whole influence of the Church in his favour. Three weeks after his father's death William II. was proclaimed king, and crowned with the usual formalities.

As we before stated, the Conqueror on his death-bed commanded the liberation of his half-brother, Odo, the Bishop of Bayeux. That warlike prelate, who had recovered some portion of his possessions in Kent, had long been the enemy of Lanfranc. The prompt compliance of the archbishop with the letter of the deceased king led William at first to yield himself entirely to his directions. Odo therefore extended his hatred to his nephew, and he set himself accordingly to form a party in favour of the eldest brother, Robert, who was already in possession of the duchy of Normandy, as well as the county of Maine.

The great point he urged upon the nobles whom he enlisted in the cause of the last-named prince, was the fact that they held possessions in both countries, and that it would be much more prudent to hold their lands of one sovereign only. These representations were not without effect; and whilst the newly-crowned king held the festival of Easter, the barons, who had matured their plans, departed to raise the standard of revolt in various parts of the kingdom—Odo, in Kent; William, Bishop of Durham, in Northumberland; Geoffrey of Coutances, in Somerset; Roger Montgomery, in Shropshire; Hugh de Bigod, in Norfolk; and Hugh de Grantmesnil, in Leicester.

The rising which thus took place might have been formidable if the movements of the insurgents had been seconded by energetic action on the part of Robert. That pleasure-loving prince, who had promised to bring over an army from Normandy, once more sacrificed the prospect of a throne to his habitual indolence: and Odo waited in vain for the assistance which was to come across the channel. When at length single ships, with detachments of the invading forces, ventured from the Norman coast, they were intercepted and destroyed by English cruisers. The Norman attempt at invasion was abandoned, and the English insurgents were left to sustain the shock of the king's forces as best they might.

The first attacks of Rufus were directed against his uncle Odo of Bayeux. That fierce and turbulent bishop waited his coming at Pevensey, which he had fortified and garrisoned. This stronghold was taken after a siege of a few weeks, and Odo fell into the hands of Rufus, who set him at liberty, on condition of his taking a solemn oath to deliver up Rochester Castle into the king's possession, and to quit the country immediately afterwards.

Rochester Castle was held by Eustace, Count of Boulogne, one of the warmest partisans of Robert. When Odo arrived before the gates with the king's escort, and demanded in set form that the keys

DEPARTURE OF BISHOP ODO FROM ROCHESTER. (*See p.* 126.)

should be given up, the count took him prisoner with his guards. This was a stratagem by which Odo hoped to escape the accusation of perjury, while he continued his rebellious course of action against the king. As the real commander of the garrison, this truculent bishop sustained for many weeks the attacks of his royal nephew, who, with his united forces of English and Normans, laid siege to the castle. Defied by his own countrymen, the Red King turned for counsel and assistance to the English. He adopted a policy of conciliation towards those nobles of English blood who still retained any influence; he made liberal promises, which afterwards were only partially fulfilled, and he obtained their adherence to his cause. The king proclaimed the old English call to battle, "Let every man who is not a man of nothing,* whether he live in burgh or out of burgh, leave his house and come," and many Englishmen flocked to his standard.

At length the besieged were subdued by disease and famine, and compelled to capitulate. They sent to William, informing him of their desire, and demanding that they should be allowed to retain their lands and titles under his sovereignty. Rufus at first refused to grant such a permission; but the Norman troops in his army, who could not forget that the garrison of the castle were their countrymen, and many of whom may have had relatives or friends within the walls, made appeals to the mercy of the king. "We," they said, "who have been with thee in great dangers, entreat thee to spare our countrymen, who are thine also, and who have fought with thy father." †

After much entreaty, the king permitted the besieged to leave the town with their arms and

WILLIAM II., SURNAMED RUFUS.

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* A "man of nothing," in Anglo-Saxon "nithing," a term of abuse and contempt.

† Ordericus Vitalis.

horses. Not satisfied with this concession, Odo had the arrogance to demand that when the garrison quitted the castle the bugles of the king's troops should not sound in token of triumph, as was the custom in those days. Rufus replied angrily that he would not grant such a request for a thousand marks of gold.

The Norman adherents of Robert then passed out of the gates with ensigns lowered, and amidst the sounds of exultation from the king's troops. At the sight of Odo, a great clamour arose among the English soldiers. They remembered the thousand crimes of the soldier-bishop, and cried out that he was unfit to live. "Ropes! bring ropes!" they shouted; "hang the traitor bishop and his friends!" Such sounds as these from every side thundered in the ears of the prelate, and thus, pursued by curses, he left the country for ever.

Meanwhile the conspirators in another part of the kingdom had met with ill success. The Earl of Shrewsbury, and with him other Norman nobles, had collected an army, which was occupied in laying waste the surrounding country. The earl with his troops set out from Shrewsbury, plundering and burning towns and villages, and putting many of the inhabitants to the sword. The progress of this marauding force was stopped on its arrival before Worcester. The citizens, excited by a deep hatred of their Norman oppressors, closed the gates, and, conveying their wives and children into the castle, prepared for a desperate resistance. Headed by their bishop, who refused to go into the castle, but took the post of danger on the walls, they gave battle to the besiegers, and having watched their opportunity when part of the Norman forces were absent on one of their plundering expeditions, the citizens sallied forth upon the remainder, and cut many of them to pieces. These reverses proved fatal to the success of the conspiracy, and Rufus found little difficulty in dealing with the rest of the insurgent chiefs. Some he won to his side by promises; others, who still defied him, were quickly subdued, and were visited with various degrees of punishment, or made their escape into Normandy, with the loss of their estates. As soon as the insurrection was quelled, and all danger from that source was at an end, Rufus revoked the concessions he had made to his English subjects, and before long the English population were reduced to their previous condition of servitude and misery.

In the following year (1089) Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, died. If we compare the acts of his life with those of his contemporaries, and judge of his character with a due regard to the times in which he lived, we shall find his memory entitled to our respect. It is said of him that he was "a wise, politic, and learned prelate, who, whilst he lived, mollified the furious and cruel nature of King William Rufus, instructing to forbear such wild and outrageous behaviour as his youth was inclined unto." * The archbishop built various hospitals and almshouses, and recovered twenty-five manors which had been wrested from the see of Canterbury. One of these was a large estate which had been seized by Odo, and which that rapacious bishop was compelled to restore. Removed from the influence of Lanfranc, the king gave the rein to his debaucheries, and showed himself "very cruel and inconstant in all his doings, so that he became a heavy burden unto his people." He appointed no successor to the primacy, but kept the see of Canterbury vacant four years, seizing the revenues, and applying them to his own vicious purposes.

Rufus elevated to the offices of royal chaplain and chief minister of state a Norman priest, named Randolf, who had received the surname of Le Flambard, or the Firebrand. This man, who was of humble origin, was of bad character, ambitious, ready-witted, and a willing pander to the vices of the king. To raise money for his royal master's pleasures, he increased the burdens of the people; inflicted heavy fines in punishment of trifling offences; and caused a second survey of the kingdom to be made, raising the estimated value of estates, and increasing the royal revenues, at the expense of great suffering throughout the country. Contentions were continually occurring between the English and their oppressors. Everywhere the Normans showed themselves cruel and avaricious, trampling down the conquered race, and treating them as inferior beings. Flambard, who was Bishop of Lincoln, ruled his diocese with such tyranny that, as we read in an old chronicle, the inhabitants wished rather to die than live under his authority.

At length William, seized with remorse after an attack of illness, appointed Anselm, the Abbot of Bec, to the vacant archbishopric. Anselm was sorely unwilling. "You would yoke me," said he, "a poor feeble old sheep, with the savage bull." But he withstood the king with saintly patience, constantly inveighing against the corruption of the court, until, in 1097, he was forced to retire from the royal persecution to Rome.

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* Holinshed.

Meanwhile the Norman fortresses of Albemarle, St. Valery, and others, were obtained possession of by various means, and were held in the name of King William; and Conan, a powerful burgess of Rouen, had entered into the conspiracy, and engaged to betray the capital into the hands of a lieutenant of Rufus. Robert at length was roused to the dangers which surrounded him, but finding himself without money to raise troops, he applied to Philip I., of France, for assistance. Philip responded to the call, and advanced with an army to the borders of Normandy: but Rufus sent him a sum of money as a bribe, and the French king returned at once to his own country.

Robert appealed to his brother Henry, whom he had placed some time before in possession of a portion of the Norman duchy, in return for a sum of £3,000 which Henry had advanced. Since that time frequent quarrels had occurred between them, and it is related that, on one occasion, Henry was arrested by the duke's orders, and kept for a short time in prison. However, on receiving Robert's request for succour, Henry came to Rouen, and rendered his brother important assistance. Reginald de Warrenne, the lieutenant of Rufus, was driven back and compelled to retreat: the burgess Conan was taken prisoner, and pushed by Prince Henry, with deliberate cruelty, through the window of a high tower in the cathedral.

Early in the year 1091, the Red King landed an English army in Normandy, and advanced into the country. Robert again applied to Philip of France who exerted himself to arrange a treaty of peace between the two brothers. By the provisions of this treaty, which was signed at Caen, the lands of Eu, Albemarle, Fécamp, and others, were assigned to Rufus; and it was agreed that no further attempt should be made by Robert upon the English throne. Robert was to be aided to conquer the districts of Maine and portions of Henry's territory in place of those which he resigned in Normandy, and William engaged to pardon those barons who had defended his brother's cause, and to restore to them their titles and lands. The barons of the two factions agreed that if the king survived the duke, he was to have possession of Normandy; and if the duke outlived the king, he should receive the English crown. This treaty was signed by twelve barons on each side, who swore to maintain its provisions.

Peace had been concluded between the two elder sons of the Conqueror; but it only produced war between Robert and Rufus, on the one side, and Henry on the other. Finding that his brothers were combining to despoil him, Henry seized St. Michael's Mount, a solitary rock on the coast of Normandy, and in this strong position he sustained a long siege from the combined armies of his kinsmen. An incident of the siege is related by some of the old chroniclers to the following effect:—The supply of water in the castle fell short, and the garrison were reduced to great distress from thirst. Robert, having been informed of this circumstance, sent a supply of wine to his brother Henry, and also permitted some of the people of the castle to fetch water. This conduct incensed William, who expressed his indignation at such generosity; but Robert replied that he could not suffer his brother to die of thirst. "Where," said he, "shall we get another brother when he is gone?" There is another story told of the same siege, from which it appears that on one occasion Rufus had a narrow escape from death. The king had ridden out alone to take a survey of the fortress, when he was suddenly attacked by two of Henry's soldiers, who struck him from his horse. One of the men was about to dispatch him, when Rufus called out, "Hold, knave! I am the King of England!" The soldier threw down his dagger, and raised him from the ground with professions of respect. It is related that Rufus rewarded the man with presents, and took him into his service.

According to some accounts, the besieging forces retired without having obtained possession of the fortress; but the more probable story, and that which rests on the better authority, is that Prince Henry was at length obliged to capitulate, and that he was deprived of all his estates. For two years he wandered about the Continent with a scanty escort and in great poverty. At length he obtained the government of the city of Domfront, and in that position he displayed much ability, and obtained considerable power in the surrounding country.

Meanwhile (1091) Malcolm Canmore had invaded England, and had penetrated "even to Chester." William sent an army to oppose him, and, according to some authorities, also fitted out a naval force, which was overtaken by a storm on the Scottish coast and destroyed.* The two armies met somewhere on the borders of Scotland, but the impending conflict was prevented by the efforts of Robert of Normandy, who had returned with William to England, and Edgar Atheling. A treaty of peace was concluded, by which Malcolm rendered homage to Rufus, as he had done to

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* William of Malmesbury.

William the Conqueror, and was permitted to retain certain lands in Northumberland, of which he had become possessed.

Soon after (1093) Rufus gave directions for the building of a fortress at Carlisle, and having sent a number of English to inhabit the town, he bestowed on them many valuable privileges. This act, if not an infringement of the recent treaty with Malcolm, was at least a violation of the rights of that monarch. The earldom of Cumberland had been for centuries attached to the Scottish crown, and Malcolm demanded its restitution. A conference took place between the two kings, and Rufus having refused redress for the injury, Malcolm returned in haste to Scotland, and carried an army into Northumberland, burning and laying waste the country. Before Rufus could advance to meet him, the Scottish monarch had fallen into an ambush, and was killed, together with his eldest son, at Alnwick. It is related that when the news of the death of her husband and son was brought to Margaret, the Queen of Scotland, she bowed her head beneath the stroke, and died within four days afterwards.

GREAT SEAL OF WILLIAM II.

William, after his return from Carlisle, fell sick at Gloucester; and being oppressed with the recollection of his many crimes, and probably deriving little comfort from the ghostly ministrations of Flambard, he gave signs of repentance, and promised on his recovery to amend his life. The repentance, however, passed away with the danger, and he is represented as having become from this time more cruel and debauched than before.

The king still withholding from his brother Robert the possessions which were his right, the duke returned to Normandy, and sent heralds to William, according to the usage of chivalry, denouncing him as a false and perjured knight, who held possession of lands which he had resigned by treaty. William went to Normandy to answer the charge, and agreed to submit to the decision of a court composed of the high Norman nobility. The award, however, being in favour of Robert, the Red King refused to abide by the decision, and, leading an army into Normandy, he defeated the adherents of the duke in several engagements.

Events followed each other closely resembling those which took place on William's previous expedition against his brother (1094). Robert, as before, made an appeal to Philip. The disputes between the sons of the Conqueror would seem to have been a source of considerable profit to the King of France, and his ready response to the call of Robert was probably less from a regard for his neighbour's welfare than from a view to his own interest. Rufus determined to buy him off as he had done before, and to obtain money for this purpose he devised a scheme in which he had the assistance of Randolf Flambard. He ordered a levy of 20,000 men in England, and when the troops arrived at Hastings to embark, it was announced to them that the king was willing to excuse them from the dangers of the campaign, and that each man would be permitted to return to his home on payment of ten shillings towards the expenses of the war. The money raised by this means was paid to Philip, who marched his forces back to France. The small and ill-appointed army of Robert would probably now have been overcome, had not affairs in England compelled Rufus to relinquish the contest.

The Welsh had taken advantage of the king's difficulties to invade the adjoining counties, and "after their accustomed manner,"* carried off the cattle, and plundered and murdered the inhabitants, many of whom they also made prisoners. They laid siege to the castle of Montgomery, and took it by assault, slaying all the garrison. William in 1095 marched hastily into Wales, but found it impossible to reach the marauders, who kept to the cover of the woods and marshes, and among the mountains, watching their opportunity to slay any of the English and Norman troops whom they could reach unawares. Rufus pursued them over the hills; but his march was attended with heavy loss to his army, and he was at length compelled to retreat, " not without some note of dishonour." Two other expeditions met with no better success. Thereupon he left the conquest of Wales to his nobles, whose eagerness was whetted by grants of land in the unconquered districts. An army was despatched under the command of the Earl of Shrewsbury, and the Earl of Chester, who re-took the isle of Anglesea, of which the Welsh had obtained possession.† The inhabitants were maltreated or put to the sword; but, having received some reinforcements, a battle ensued, in which the Earl of Shrewsbury was slain. The victory, however, was on the side of the Earl of Chester, who remained for some time in Wales, desolating the country.

SURRENDER OF BAMBOROUGH CASTLE. (*See p.* 130.)

While the Welsh were still unsubdued, Rufus received information of a powerful confederacy which had been formed against him in the north of England. The king had reason to suspect some of his nobles of disaffection, and especially Robert Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, a powerful noble, whose long absence from court had excited suspicion. A royal proclamation was issued, calling upon every baron in the kingdom to appear at court at the approaching festival of Whitsuntide, on pain of outlawry. The Earl of

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* Holinshed.

† Matthew Paris.

Northumberland neglected to obey the summons, and the king immediately marched an army to Newcastle, where he surprised some of the earl's accomplices. He next besieged and took the castle of Tynemouth, and thence proceeded to Bamborough, an impregnable fortress, to which the Earl had retreated with his family.

After various unsuccessful attempts to take this castle by storm, Rufus, who seems to have inherited much of the military talent of his father, adopted another plan of attack. He built a wooden fort opposite Bamborough, calling it *Malvoisin*, or "bad neighbour"; and, having placed a garrison in it, he withdrew the rest of his army. His lieutenants were directed to use every opportunity of inflicting damage upon the adherents of Earl Mowbray, or of gaining possession of his person.

One night the earl quitted his castle with an escort of only thirty horsemen. The object with which he did so is variously stated; but the most probable account is that he was betrayed by some followers of Rufus, who offered to give up the town of Newcastle into his possession. The earl was surprised by a body of Norman troops, and while many of his retinue were cut to pieces, he escaped from his assailants, and took sanctuary at St. Oswin's monastery, Tynemouth. By the laws of chivalry, the blackest criminal was safe under the shadow of the Cross; but the soldiers of William were deterred neither by those laws, nor by any respect for the sacredness of the place. They pursued the earl to his sanctuary, and after a desperate resistance made him prisoner.

Having carried Earl Mowbray to Bamborough, and placed him before the gates of his castle, they demanded a parley with the Countess Matilda. On her appearance, they exhibited her husband as a prisoner, and told her that they would put out his eyes before her face unless she at once gave up the castle into their hands. Matilda is described as having been remarkable for her beauty; she was young, and had been married to the earl only a few months before. She did not long hesitate, but ordered the gates to be thrown open. Among the followers of Mowbray was one through whom Rufus gained a knowledge of the extent of the conspiracy, and of the persons implicated in it. The subsequent fate of Mowbray was that of a living death. His young wife had indeed saved him from blindness, but he was not the less deprived of the light of day. Condemned to perpetual imprisonment, he was confined in a dungeon at Windsor Castle, where we read that he dragged on existence for thirty years afterwards. Another account, however, has it that he ended his life as a monk.

The property of the banished nobles was plundered by the adherents of the king, and then left for some time uncultivated, and without owners. Nevertheless, the people of the town or hundred in which such estates lay, were compelled to pay the full amount of land tax as before. The king, also, forcibly raised troops of men to build a wall encircling the Conqueror's Tower at London, a bridge over the Thames, and, near the West Minster, a hall or palace of audiences, for the stated assemblies or assizes of the great barons.*

The money which William Rufus paid to his brother for the possession of Normandy was obtained by inflicting new burdens and exactions upon his people. "All this," says Holinshed, "was grievous and intolerable, as well to the spirituality as temporality, so that divers bishops and abbesses, who had already made away with some of their chalices and church jewels to pay the king, made now plain answer that they were not able to help him with any more; unto whom, on the other side, as the report went, the king said again, 'Have you not, I beseech you, coffins of gold and silver, full of dead men's bones?' meaning the shrines in which the relics of saints were enclosed."

The king also argued that there was no sacrilege in taking money obtained from such a source, for the purpose of prosecuting a holy war, and delivering the sepulchre of Christ from the hands of the infidel. He did not choose to remember that the expedition to the Holy Land was one in which he had no part, and that he required the money, not for that purpose, but to obtain a worldly possession. If the argument carried little weight, the force by which it was backed was not to be resisted, and the spoils of the altar, as well as the hoards of civilians, were seized in the king's name.

Robert, having resigned his dukedom, and set out for the Holy Land, William passed over into Normandy to take possession. He was received with welcome by the Norman nobles, who, if not well disposed towards their new sovereign were overawed by his power or bought by his gold. The people of Maine, however, rose in revolt, and, headed by Helie, the Lord of La Flèche, the insurrection assumed an importance which rendered it necessary for Rufus to take energetic measures for its repression. He entered Maine at the head of a large force, but on the interference of the Count of Anjou and Philip of France, he consented to a truce with the insurgents, and Helie, having been taken prisoner, was set at liberty, on tendering his submission, and giving up of Le Mans into the king's hands. (A.D. 1099.)

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* **Westminster Hall was founded by William Rufus in 1097.**

The people, however, remained disaffected towards the English king. A year passed away without any change in this state of things, when one day, as William was hunting in the New Forest, a messenger came to him with the intelligence that Helie had obtained possession of the town of Le Mans, that the inhabitants had joined him, and were besieging the castle, containing the Norman garrison. Rufus immediately set off for the sea-coast without waiting for an escort; and when some of his lords came up with him, as he was about to embark, they counselled him to wait until troops could be summoned to accompany him. William replied, "Such as love me, I know well, will follow me," and went at once on shipboard. A storm was blowing so violently that even the sailors hesitated to set sail; but the king was determined to proceed, and cried out to the master to weigh anchor, asking him if he had ever heard of a king that was drowned?

Rufus escaped the storm, and landed next day at Harfleur. When the news of his advance reached Le Mans the insurgents were struck with dismay. Helie, forgetting his knightly fame, and the safety of the people, disbanded his troops and fled at the mere sound of the enemy's approach, while William passed through the country, dealing ruin and desolation around him.

On his return to England, the king began, "after his old manner, to spoil and waste the country by unreasonable exactions," assisted by Randolf Flambard. Various public buildings, which were erected by Rufus, served as pretexts for demands of money, most of which was applied to satisfy his own private extravagance.

In the month of August, 1100, there was held, in the New Forest, a hunting meeting, at which the king was present. This district, where the blackened ruins of villages still remained, where the ground had been watered by the tears and the blood of the miserable inhabitants, murdered or driven from their homes, where the trees grew thickly in commemoration of a deed of cruelty which has but few parallels in history—this gloomy solitude was destined to be the death-scene of Rufus, as it had already been of two other persons of the Conqueror's blood. In the year 1081, Richard, the eldest son of William I., had been accidentally killed in the New Forest; and in May, 1100, Richard, son of Duke Robert and nephew of Rufus, was killed there accidentally by an arrow. In these successive calamities, the people thought they saw a retribution for the crime which had been committed in that place.

On August 2, the king and his court were assembled at Malwood Keep or Castle, preparing to go a-hunting. A large and noble company were there making merry, and at the side of the King sat Prince Henry—the two brothers having become reconciled some time before. Among the party was a Norman knight, whose name was Sir Walter Tyrrel, Lord of Poix. The company separated on arriving in the forest, as the custom was in hunting; the only person who remained near to the king being Sir Walter Tyrrel. As it drew towards evening a hart suddenly bounding from a thicket, crossed the path of the king. Rufus drew his bow, but the shot missed its mark. Tyrrel was placed at some little distance in the underwood, and the hart, being attacked on both sides, stood for a moment at bay. Then the king, who had spent all his arrows, called out to his companion, "Shoot! shoot! in the devil's name!" Tyrrel obeyed, and the arrow, glancing from a tree, struck the king in the breast, piercing him to the heart. Rufus fell beside his startled horse, and died instantaneously. Such is the story most commonly related of the death of the Red King, but the account is not to be received without reservation. The facts which may be considered fully authenticated are, that Rufus met with a violent death in the New Forest, having been shot in the breast by an arrow. Whether the bow was drawn "at a venture," or by the hand of a murderer—whether the hand was that of Tyrrel, or of another—are questions to which no positive answer can be given. Tyrrel, however, was suspected from the first of having killed the king. He immediately galloped away to the sea-coast, and took ship for Normandy, whence he proceeded to seek the protection of the King of France. On arriving there he swore he had no part in the death of King William; but in those days few men hesitated either to make or break an oath for a powerful motive, and, therefore, this circumstance of itself would not be sufficient to throw discredit on the account already related. The body of the king was discovered by a poor charcoal burner, by whom it was carried in a cart to Winchester Cathedral, where it was buried. He died without issue.

ST. HELENA DISCOVERING THE TRUE CROSS.
(From a Greek MS. of the Ninth Century in the National Library, Paris.) [*See p.* 135.]

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FIRST CRUSADE.

The Institution of Chivalry—Affairs in the Holy Land—Pilgrimages—Persecution of Christians—Peter the Hermit—Crusade Decided on—Progress of Peter's Mission—The Council of Clermont—Attitude of Pope Urban—The Truce of God—Expedition of Walter the Penniless—Excesses of the Crusaders—Defeat of the Christians by the Turks—Conduct of the Emperor Alexius—Disaster in Hungary—Geoffrey de Bouillon—March of his Army—Robert of Normandy and his Troops—Imprisonment of Hugh of Vermandois—Arrival of Godfrey before Constantinople—The Byzantine Court—The Church of Santa Sophia—Scenes of Magnificence—Reception of Godfrey by the Emperor—Tancred's Army leaves Italy—Bohemond's Submission—Count Raymond at Constantinople—Arrival of Robert of Normandy—Siege of Nicæa—Treachery of the Emperor—Severe Struggle with the Turks—Bravery of Robert—Flight of the Turks—Crusaders' sufferings on their March—Siege and Fall of Antioch—Defeat of the Persians—Pestilence at Antioch—Arrival of the Crusaders before Jerusalem—Fall of the City—Vengeance of the Crusaders—Godfrey elected King of Jerusalem—Hospitallers and Templars—Close of the First Crusade.

In the year 1096 Robert determined to join a crusade then about to set out for the Holy Land, and to enable him to do so, he agreed to pledge his duchy of Normandy into the hands of Rufus for a sum of £6,666. This transaction is described by the historians as having been a mortgage for three years; but it must have been evident, even to the uncalculating mind of Robert, that he had little chance of regaining possession of his property at the end of that time.

To enable us to understand this extraordinary proceeding on the part of Robert, it will be necessary to examine the causes which led to those expeditions which are called the Crusades. These causes, which had been in operation for hundreds of years, were two, of very opposite nature—namely, in the East, the spread of Mahometan power; and in the West, the institution of chivalry, preceded by the introduction of Christianity.

The institution of chivalry had for its object the cultivation of those virtues which may be classed under the word *manhood*, in its best and widest sense. The true knight was supposed to be pious, truthful, and brave; a generous friend, a gallant warrior, a devoted lover. It was necessary for him to add great strength of body, and skill in all manly exercises, to gentleness of manner and culture of mind. Terrible in battle, it was his duty to wield the sword of justice, to strike down the oppressor; but to help the weak, and give his life, if need be, for the innocent.

The youth who aspired to knighthood began his career as a page in some noble house, where, under the gentle influence of women, he was taught various accomplishments, and imbued with that beautiful though fantastic dream of honour which he hoped to realise in his future life. At the age of fourteen the page became an esquire, and was

SWAIN Sc.
H.M.P.

INITIATION INTO THE ORDER OF KNIGHTHOOD. (*See p.* 134.)

permitted to wear a sword. He now began a regular course of training for arms, and usually sought to attach himself to some knight of fame, whom he attended in hall or field, and supported in battle. The young aspirant was admitted to the honours of knighthood at the age of twenty-one, unless he had previously won his spurs by some gallant feat of arms. This honour was of rare occurrence, as, by the laws of chivalry, the duties of esquire were limited to attendance upon his lord, and he was permitted few opportunities of personal distinction.

The original spirit of chivalry was essentially religious. The initiation into the order of knighthood was a religious ceremony, and usually took place on one of the feasts of the Church, as Easter day, the day of Pentecost, or Christmas day. The aspirant prepared himself for his new dignity by long vigils, fasts, and prayer; and on the night before the ceremony took place, he repaired alone to the church, where he passed the hours in watching beside his armour.

On the day appointed, high mass was performed in the presence of the nobles and bishops and an assembly of the people; and after the sword of the novice had been consecrated to the service of heaven, he took a solemn vow, according to the laws of chivalry, "to speak the truth, to succour the helpless and oppressed, and never to turn back from an enemy." The bishop then dubbed him a knight, and the other knights, and often the ladies present, advanced and armed the youth. The spurs were usually buckled on first, and thus came to be regarded as the symbol of knighthood.

Such was the form by which a young man was admitted to the highest dignity of chivalry. Chivalry recognised nothing higher or nobler than the condition of a knight, and the fame of every man, instead of being tied to his name by a title, was borne by the mouths of minstrels and palmers.

Various writers have attempted to fix the date at which chivalry first took its rise; but on this point there is no certain information. Probably the idea of chivalry was the growth of centuries, and made its way gradually through the corruptions of the times in which it was born. Whatever may have been its origin, the institution was in its infancy in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and received no marked development until the time of the first Crusade. The stories of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table* are as fabulous as the wonders of Merlin or the tales of the Arabian Nights. In the days of Charles the Great, chivalry, in the general sense of the word, was yet unborn; and though in the time of Alfred its spirit undoubtedly existed in our own country, it had yet assumed no name or distinctive form.

According to Tacitus, customs bearing a resemblance to those of chivalry existed among the German nations in the institution known as the *comitatus*. On the fall of Rome, these tribes subdued and colonised the country now called France, and it is probable that they planted there the germ of the institution of chivalry. The first traces of its existence in France appear soon after the time of Charles the Great. It originated with a few knights, who endeavoured to introduce among their licentious companions a love of virtue and honour. However small may have been the early success of their efforts, the principle of chivalry to which they gave expression shines like a star in those dark ages.

The laws of chivalry gradually became recognised and enforced, and were submitted to by every man who desired to win either the smiles of women or honourable fame among men. Refined and mystical as were the doctrines of chivalry, its laws were practical and severe, demanding mortification and self-denial. In later times the simple and austere habits of the knights were exchanged for luxury and licentiousness, and the spirit of chivalry decayed with the growth of those arts of life which conduce to ease and refinement.

Towards the end of the eleventh century, the attention of Europe was attracted to the state of affairs in the Holy Land, and chivalry, which had hitherto been rather a name than a reality, received from this cause a sudden and powerful impulse.

From the period of the destruction of the second temple, the history of Jerusalem had been a record of strife and bloodshed. During the early occupation of the city by the Romans, the holy places were profaned by pagan rites, and the spots venerated alike by Jew and Christian became the scene of sacrifices to heathen deities.

In the fourth century, when Rome herself acknowledged the doctrines of Christianity, churches were erected on the ruins of the temples of Venus and Jove, and Jerusalem was again regarded as the seat of the true faith. When Mahomet appeared and spread his new doctrines throughout the East, the aspect of affairs was once more changed, and the Holy City fell into the hands of

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* "Morte d'Arthur" was a French romance, translated by Sir Thomas Mallory, Knight, and printed by Caxton in 1481.

PETER THE HERMIT PREACHING THE FIRST CRUSADE

From the Painting by James Archer, R.S.A.

the Arabians. In the year 969, the dominion of the caliphs of Egypt was established over the whole of Palestine.

In the following century a multitude of rude and savage races from the shores of the Caspian Sea invaded the lands of the people of the south. These hordes, called in history the Seljuk Turks, gradually extended their conquests, and between 1038 and 1092 obtained possession of Persia, Arabia, and the greater part of Syria. The invaders embraced the religion of Mahomet, and in many cases a fusion took place between them and the conquered nations. After various vicissitudes, Jerusalem, in 1076, fell into the hands of the Turkish supporters of the Caliph of Cairo.

In every age the Holy Land had been held in the highest veneration by the Christian nations. Pilgrims proceeded thither from the most distant parts of Europe, in the faith that the long and toilsome journey would secure for them some spiritual benefit. Dressed in the costume mentioned in the Bible, and carrying with him only a staff in his hand and a scrip at his side, the pilgrim trusted entirely to charity for support. Wherever the Christian religion prevailed among the people, that charity was exhibited; his character was held in veneration, and food and lodging were provided for him as a religious duty. At rare intervals along his way, he came to an hospital or almshouse, built for the reception of pilgrims by some Christian prince. On his return he placed in the church of his native town the branch of the sacred palm-tree* (which he had brought from Jerusalem), in proof of the accomplishment of his vow.

During the time that Palestine remained under Christian rule, these pilgrimages were performed without much danger, and devotees from all parts of Europe flocked to the Holy City. The coffers of the Church were enriched by the sale of relics, which each traveller eagerly desired to possess.

Under the sway of the Caliphs the pilgrimages continued, but the Christians were treated with indignity by the Turks, and various persecutions took place. In the tenth century a belief was entertained that the end of the world was at hand, and people of all classes hurried to Jerusalem in hope of a purification from their sins. In the eleventh century the persecutions of the Christians increased, and their condition became wretched in the extreme. They were, indeed, tolerated in the Holy City on payment of a tribute of two pieces of gold yearly, but their religious ceremonies were prohibited, their property was frequently plundered, and the honour of their daughters violated.

Since the fourth century it was generally believed that the very cross on which Christ suffered had been discovered at Jerusalem, and a curious drawing of this subject occurs in a Greek manuscript of the ninth century. This belief afforded an additional stimulus to the piety of devotees, and a piece of the sacred wood was regarded as of inestimable value. Pilgrims, therefore, still made their way to Jerusalem, but were not permitted to enter the city except on payment of a piece of gold—a large sum at that day. Few of the pilgrims possessed enough to satisfy this demand, and they were driven from the gates, with their long-deferred hope turned to utter despair. Many of them died from famine before the walls of the city; many more perished by the roadside, as they pursued their weary journey homewards; and but few survived to tell the tale to Europe, and to kindle the flame which was soon to burn up with fury.

The Christian emperors of the East are reported to have sent letters from time to time to the princes of Europe, detailing the sufferings of the Christians in Judea, and soliciting assistance. These appeals, together with the accounts of Turkish cruelties given by the returned pilgrims, caused a feeling of deep indignation throughout Europe, and aroused the spirit of chivalry.

At this time there appeared on the scene a remarkable man, who is known by the name of Peter the Hermit. In his youth he had been a soldier, and had been married, but subsequently he became a priest. He is described as having been small and mean in person, but with eyes powerful in expression, and an eloquent voice. He had long been noted for the austerity of his life, and it is said of him that he found pleasure in the greatest abstinence.

This man formed the determination of visiting Jerusalem, and having performed the journey in safety, he paid the piece of gold demanded, and was admitted into the city. Here he was a witness of the cruelties perpetrated upon the Christians, and was seized with horror and indignation at the sight. He held a conference with the Greek patriarch, who, at the suggestion of Peter, determined to write to the Pope and the princes of the West, describing the misery of the Christians, and praying for protection.

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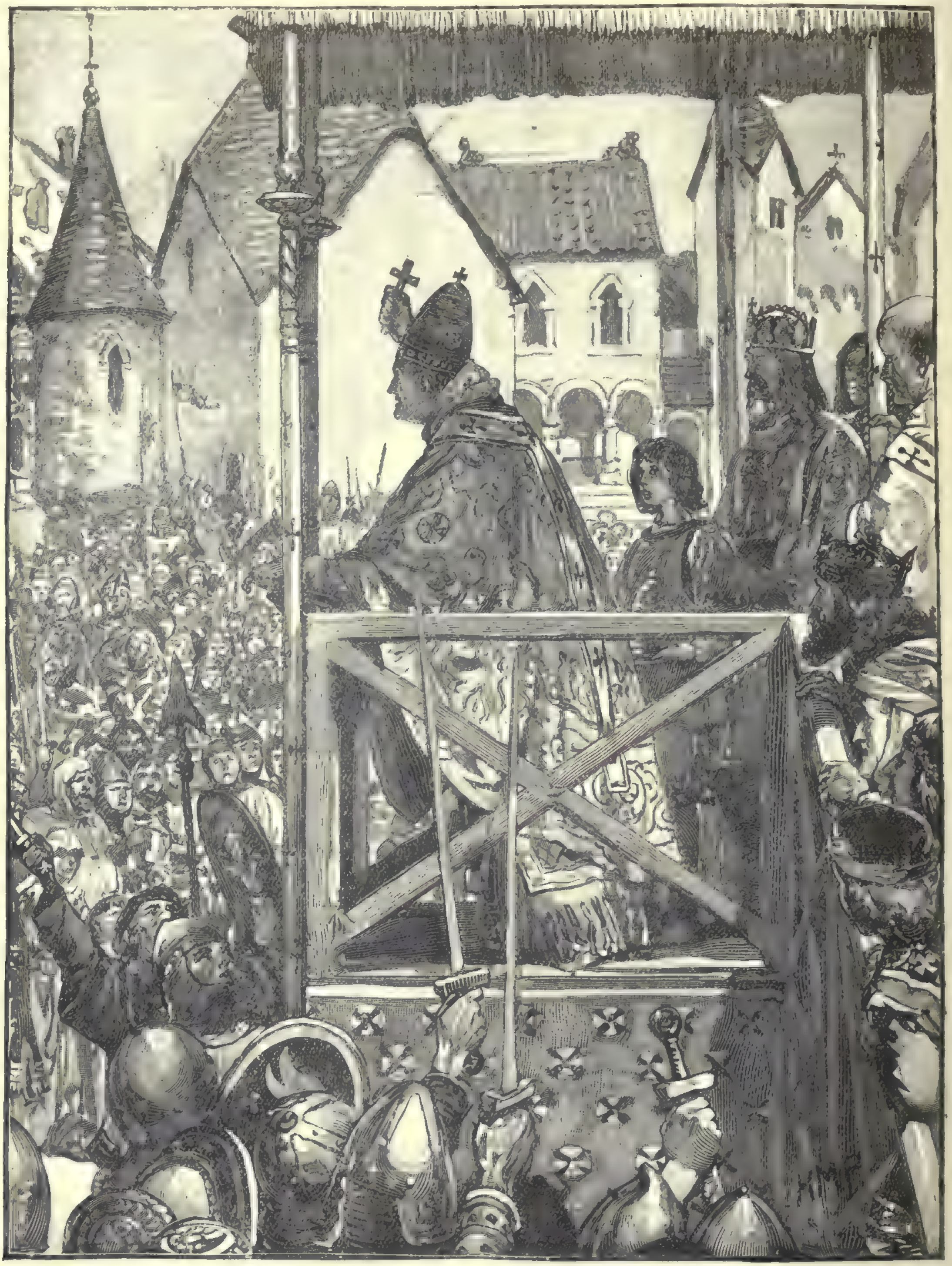
* Old chroniclers speak of pilgrims returning from the Holy Land with their staves wreathed with palm, and from this custom arose the word "palmer," which signified a holy traveller from Jerusalem.



POPE URBAN II. PREACHING THE FIRST CRUSADE IN THE MARKET-PLACE OF CLERMONT. (*See p. 138.*)

Furnished with his credentials, Peter returned to Italy and laid his complaint before Urban II. The tale told by the hermit was received with the deepest attention, and the Pope warmly espoused his cause. Urban gave his authority to the scheme of the Crusade, and with the promise of his co-operation, Peter set out to preach the delivery of the Holy Land throughout Europe.

The story of his progress is told by various writers of that age. "He set out," says Guibert Nogent, "from whence I know not, nor with what design; but we saw him at that time passing through the towns and villages, preaching everywhere, and the people surrounding him in crowds, loading him with presents, and celebrating his sanctity with such high eulogiums, that I never remember to have seen such honours paid to any other person. He showed himself very generous, however, in the distribution of the things given to him. He brought back to their homes the women that had abandoned their husbands, not without adding gifts of his own, and re-established peace between those who lived unhappily, with wonderful authority. In everything he said or did, it seemed as if there was something divine; so much so, that people went to pluck some of the hairs from his mule, which they kept afterwards as relics; which I mention here, not that they really were so, but only served to satisfy the public love of anything extraordinary. While out of doors he wore a woollen tunic with a brown mantle, which fell down to his heels. He had his arms and his feet bare, ate little or no bread, and lived upon fish and wine."

Photo: Abdullah Frères, Constantinople.

THE MOSQUE OF SANTA SOPHIA, CONSTANTINOPLE.

Such was the appearance of the man whose eloquence drew after him the whole of Europe. The records of history afford no other instance of events so stupendous, arising from a cause apparently so insignificant. The position of Peter, however, is not to be measured by his woollen garb and low estate. The fame of the anchorite had gone before him; he carried with him the Pope's authority; he was a palmer from Jerusalem, who had himself seen the things he described. The age was enthusiastic, and religious sentiment, as well as knightly ambition, was enlisted in the cause which he preached.

While Peter journeyed on from city to city, Urban called together a council at Placentia, at which deputies were present from the Emperor of Constantinople. The meeting being unanimous in favour of the Crusade, Urban determined to venture across the Alps. A Council was held in 1095 at Clermont, in Auvergne, at which were assembled bishops and princes, both of France and Germany, and a vast concourse of people. After the less important business of the meeting had been transacted, Urban came forth from the church in which the Council was held, and addressed the multitude in the market-place. He recounted the long catalogue of wrongs suffered by the Christians in the Holy Land from the pagan* race. With an eloquence for which he was remarkable, he appealed to the most powerful passions which animate the breast of mankind; and the assembly rose up and cried with one voice—"It is the will of God! it is the will of God!" The news of this Council spread with wonderful rapidity over the world; and, in the words of an old historian, "throughout the earth the Christians glorified themselves and were filled with joy; while the Gentiles of Arabia and Persia trembled, and were seized with sadness; the souls of the one race were exalted, those of the others stricken with fear and stupor." Some modern historians, in speaking of the influence possessed by Urban over the people, have reproached his memory for the use to which he applied his eloquence, and for having incited the people to the wild and bloodthirsty expeditions of the Crusades, with a view to his own interest. Such an accusation cannot be regarded as just. It is the part of wisdom, as of charity, to judge of a man's acts, not by a standard of pure and abstract right, but rather with regard to the times in which he lived and the influences by which he was surrounded. The spirit of the age was warlike and enthusiastic, and such a spirit may be traced through the conduct of Pope Urban; but there is no reason to doubt that he was sincere, and that he upheld the cause of the Crusades at the cost of great personal sacrifices.

At the Council of Clermont a universal peace was proclaimed, called the *Truce of God*, and its observance was some time afterwards sworn throughout the country. Europe had long been in a disturbed condition; the weak were liable to be plundered by the strong without redress; and wars and feuds between rival princes were continued with little intermission. It is related that at the Truce of God these evils disappeared, and for a short time there was a profound peace.

Thieves and murderers—criminals of every dye, were tempted by the prospect of boundless licence, and joined the Crusade. Every man wore the sign of the Cross upon his shoulder, cut in red cloth, and many adventurers assumed that sacred emblem in the belief that it would afford a perpetual absolution for any crime they might commit. But while preparing for the departure of the various expeditions, the Crusaders—even those of the most reckless character—abstained for a while from violence, and kept the Truce of God. This cessation of civil warfare must have endured some time, for among the wild spirits who joined the first body of the Crusade few, if any, lived to return, and the removal of so many plunderers and marauders must have produced a beneficial effect on the state of society in Europe.

People of every degree and of various nations were animated with the same ardent enthusiasm. Nobles sold or mortgaged their lands to raise money for the enterprise; poor men abandoned their homesteads and their families, and flocked to the standard of the Cross. The old writers describe the sufferings occasioned by the parting of husbands from their wives, parents from their children. They tell us, however, of exceptions to these scenes of misery. Some wives and mothers there were who, in their fanatic zeal, incited their husbands to the journey, and parted from them without a tear.

In the year 1096, the first body of the Crusaders set out for the Holy Land under the command of Walter the Penniless, a nobleman of Burgundy. This man was a soldier of fortune, noted for his poverty, but also possessed of some degree of military fame. The army which he led was a mixed rabble without order or discipline, who committed many excesses, and plundered the towns and villages which lay on their road. Passing through Germany, Walter entered Hungary, which country had been converted to Christianity several centuries before. At Semlin some stragglers of Walter's army were attacked and plundered by a portion of the inhabitants, and the arms and crosses of the men who had thus been despoiled were placed as trophies upon the walls of the city. The Crusaders called for vengeance; but Walter restrained their impetuosity, and passed on into Bulgaria. Here he found himself among a nation altogether hostile; the gates of the cities were shut against him, and his troops were unable to obtain food. Urged by hunger, they seized the flocks and herds of the natives, who attacked the invaders, and defeated them with great slaughter. Walter succeeded with difficulty in collecting the remnant of his scattered multitude, and led them on the way to Constantinople. Here, after many privations, he at length arrived and obtained permission from the emperor to await the coming of

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* The word Paynim, or Pagan, was commonly used in the Middle Ages to include all Mahometans.

Peter the Hermit, who at length appeared with a following reduced to 7,000.

The discordant elements of which the combined forces were composed soon appeared in a defiance of all authority; and between the various nations a spirit of animosity arose, which found vent in repeated quarrels and disturbances. The thirst for plunder, also, was not restrained by any gratitude for the hospitality of the emperor. Alexius had sent both money and provisions in abundance to the camp of the Crusaders, who, nevertheless, seized whatever booty came within their reach, entering houses and palaces, and stripping the lead from the roofs of the churches, and selling it to the people from whom it had been stolen.

These lawless acts continuing on the increase, the emperor found means to convey his dangerous allies across the Bosphorus, advising them not to quit their new encampment till the arrival of other divisions of the Crusade. The troops, however, continued their ravages throughout Bithynia; a stronger hand than that of a palmer was necessary to control them; and Peter, wearied with excesses which he was unable to prevent, proceeded to Constantinople for the purpose of holding a council with the emperor.

During his absence the Lombards and Germans separated from the French, and chose for their leader a man named Renault, or Rinaldo. Under his command, they resumed their march, and took possession of the fortress of Xerigord. Here they were attacked by Sultan Soliman, who cut to pieces a detachment placed in ambuscade, and then invested the fortress. The besieged possessed no supply of water within the walls, and they endured the most dreadful agonies from thirst. At the end of eight days, the leader, Rinaldo, with his chief companions, went over to the Turks, and betrayed the fortress into their hands. The remainder of the garrison were put to death without mercy.

The news of this disaster reached the French camp, and with it came a false report of the fall of Nicæa. The troops demanded to be led towards the Turkish territory, and Walter the Penniless, having in vain attempted to restrain their impatience, placed himself at their head. Before the army had advanced many leagues into the country, it was encountered by the Turks, who attacked the Crusaders in overwhelming numbers. An obstinate resistance only served to make the carnage more complete. Walter himself, after performing many feats of valour, fell covered with wounds, and the Christian army was routed so completely that only 3,000 men escaped the sword. The fugitives entrenched themselves at Civitot, where they were again attacked by a large force. The Turks surrounded the fortress with piles of wood, with the intention of destroying the garrison by fire, but the Crusaders, seizing a moment when the wind blew towards the Turkish camp, set fire to the wood themselves, and many of their enemies perished in the flames.

Meanwhile a soldier had made his escape from the town, and having reached Constantinople, told the news of these disasters to Peter the Hermit. At the prayer of Peter, the Emperor Alexius sent forces to rescue the garrison of Civitot, and the remnant of the army of the Cross was brought in safety to Constantinople. On their arrival, however, Alexius commanded them to disperse and return to their own country, and he bought from each man his arms; thus at once depriving him of the means of violence, and supplying him with money for the journey. This policy on the part of the emperor has given rise to an accusation against him of having betrayed the Crusaders, and entered into an alliance with the Turks. No such motive is required to account for the conduct of Alexius. He would necessarily be glad to purge his dominions from a number of lawless vagabonds, who committed every species of iniquity in the name of a holy cause, and who, as his allies, were more to be dreaded than the Turks his enemies.

While the expedition of Peter the Hermit thus came to an end, other bands of fanatics and adventurers were following in his steps, without being destined to reach Constantinople. The accounts of these expeditions are inevitably obscure; but the information we possess on the subject is not of a kind to induce a desire for further details. It is related that a multitude of 200,000 persons, without even a nominal leader, passed through Germany towards the south of Europe. Their course was marked by excesses of every kind; men and women lived in a state of debauchery, and indulged in drunken orgies, obtaining supplies by plundering the surrounding country. Every Jew who fell into their hands was put to death, and the fanatic multitude declared it to be the will of heaven that they should exterminate the nation who had rejected the Saviour. A terrible retribution, however, was at hand, and the sacred emblem of the Cross was purified from the stains with which it had been covered by the perpetrators of these enormities. At Merseburg, a large Hungarian force opposed the advancing multitude, who attacked that city with fury. A breach had been made in the walls, and the fall of Merseburg seemed inevitable, when some strange and sudden terror, which has never been accounted for, seized the besieging army, and they gave up the attack, and fled in dismay over the country. The Hungarians pursued them on every side, and mowed them down by hundreds. Day after day the slaughter went on, until the fields were strewn with corpses and the Danube was red with blood. Such was the fate of the first bands of Crusaders who set out towards the Holy Land. More than a quarter of a million persons had already perished by famine or disease, or by the swords of the Turks or Hungarians, whose vengeance they had excited by acts of violence and plunder. Meanwhile many powerful princes of the West were occupied in collecting troops and preparing to take the field. Among these were Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine: Hugh, Count of Vermandois, and brother of Philip, King of France; Robert, Duke of Normandy; Bohemond, Prince of Tarentum; Robert, Count of Flanders; and Raymond, Count of Toulouse; each of whom conducted an army towards Constantinople.

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF CHRISTIAN CONSTANTINOPLE.
(*From an Engraving in Anselm Banduri's "Imperium Orientale," Paris*, 1711.)

Among the leaders of the first Crusade, the most distinguished was Godfrey VI., Lord of Bouillon, Marquis of Anvers, and Duke of Lorraine. Inferior in political power to some of his companions, he was superior to them all in that influence which depends upon personal character. Although still young in years, he had earned fame in many a well-fought field; and his name was known throughout Europe in connection with acts of private virtue no less than with gallant feats of arms. Amidst the cruelty and licentiousness so commonly attributed to the men of that age, the character of Godfrey is presented to us almost without blemish; and if we make some reservation for the partiality of monkish chroniclers towards the great leader of the Crusade, there will still remain evidence of facts which entitle the memory of the Lord of Bouillon to the highest honour. Robert the Monk, one of his contemporaries, who was present at the siege of Jerusalem, speaks of Godfrey in the following terms:—"He was of beautiful countenance, tall of stature, agreeable in his discourse, of excellent morals, and at the same time so gentle that he seemed better fitted for the monk than for the knight; but when his enemies appeared before him, and the combat was at hand, his soul became filled with a mighty daring: like a lion, he feared not for his own person; and what shield, what buckler, could withstand the fall of his sword?" Long before the Crusade had been preached at Clermont, Godfrey had heard the tales of the sufferings of the Christians in Palestine, and had said that he desired to travel to Jerusalem, not with scrip and staff, but with spear and shield. At the time when the standard of the Cross was raised throughout Europe, he was suffering from a bad fever, but "immediately he shook disease from his limbs, and rising, as it were, with expanded breast, from years of decrepitude he shone with renovated vigour." * In order to furnish money for the expedition he had undertaken, he sold to the Church of Liége his beautiful domain and castle of Bouillon; and the standard which he raised was joined by his brother Baldwin, his relation, Baldwin de Bourg, and many other knights of fame.

The army of Godfrey commenced its march from the Moselle in August, 1096, and followed the course previously taken by Peter the Hermit. The order and moderation which distinguished the disciplined troops of Godfrey was as remarkable as the violence and excesses committed by the rabble which had preceded them. The march was conducted peaceably, and without incident, to the frontiers of Hungary, where the army came in sight of the unburied corpses of the multitude slain near Merseburg.

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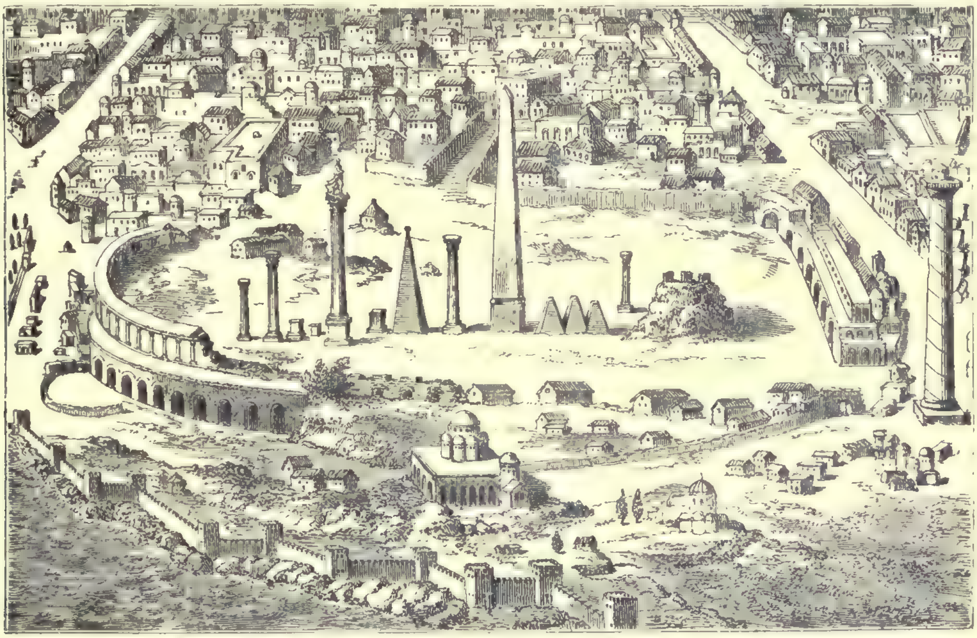
* William of Malmesbury.

Godfrey called a halt, and proceeded to investigate the causes of the spectacle which lay before him. He wrote a firm but temperate letter to the King of Hungary, demanding an account of the carnage, and Carloman sent envoys with a reply which proved satisfactory. An interview subsequently took place between the duke and the king, at the fortress of Posen. Godfrey went towards this place, accompanied by an escort of 300 knights, and conversed with the Hungarian monarch on the reconciliation of the Christians. The rights of hospitality, which were respected among the most savage nations, were also enforced by the laws of chivalry; and therefore, at the invitation of Carloman, Godfrey dismissed his retinue without hesitation, and, accompanied by a few of his knights, entered the capital. After some difficulty, he obtained the right of passage through Hungary.

While Godfrey was pursuing his course through Hungary, another body of Crusaders, headed by Hugh, Count of Vermandois, were proceeding towards Constantinople by way of Italy. Joined to this expedition, though probably not marching in the same body, were the troops of Robert, Duke of Normandy, and Stephen, Count of Blois.

Robert of Normandy was not altogether destitute of chivalrous qualities; and therefore it is no matter for surprise that this man, whose reckless and licentious character was notorious, should take up the cause of the Cross. The most irreligious men are often superstitious. The crusade was a pilgrimage, with all the pomp of war, and the temptation of earthly aggrandisement was mingled with the hope of a recompense beyond the grave. Fame in this world and happiness in the next were the prizes for which the nobles forsook their feasts and dances, and the poor their homes and their children. Robert was eloquent in speech, and, when his indolence was overcome, skilful and energetic in action; but his deeds were the result of impulse rather than of principle, and were unrestrained by prudence or good sense. He, however, possessed the popular virtue of lavish generosity, and large bands of troops, both Norman and English, attached themselves to his standard. Several independent lords also accompanied him, among whom were Eustace of Boulogne, Stephen of Albemarle, and Odo, the Bishop of Bayeux.


CIRCUS AND HIPPODROME OF CHRISTIAN CONSTANTINOPLE. *(From an Engraving in the "Imperium Orientale.")*

The army of Hugh of Vermandois crossed the Alps with the intention of proceeding by sea to the Holy Land. The old chroniclers describe in glowing terms the brilliant appearance of the troops—the splendour of their equipments—the multitude of knights with shining armour, and banners glistening in the sun. Such a sight had never before been seen in Europe, and it seemed as though this gorgeous array had been destined for pleasure rather than for war. Robert of Normandy and Stephen of Chartres dispersed their forces among the towns of Barri and Otranto, and passed the autumn in gaiety and dissipation. Hugh of Vermandois, however, determined to embark without delay, and he wrote to the Emperor Alexius, demanding haughtily that preparations should be made for his reception. But his vessels were scattered in a storm, and Hugh himself, having landed at Durazzo, was detained in captivity, and sent to Constantinople. Here he was received with great civility by Alexius, who exerted himself by flatteries and attentions to gain the good-will of his prisoner.

The news of the imprisonment of Hugh reached the army of Godfrey at Philippopolis, and Godfrey sent messengers to the emperor, demanding that the Count of Vermandois should be immediately liberated. Alexius refused to comply with the request, and Godfrey commenced hostilities by giving up to pillage the beautiful province of Thrace. This course of action had its effect, and the emperor found himself compelled to liberate the prisoners. Godfrey then, at once, repressed further acts of violence among his soldiers, and marched peaceably to Constantinople, where he arrived two days before Christmas.

The Count of Vermandois advanced from the city to meet his friend, and at that moment a messenger from the emperor approached Godfrey and invited him to visit the palace. The Lord of Bouillon, however, had been warned against the treachery probably intended by Alexius, and therefore refused to enter the walls. The inhabitants of the city were then prohibited from traffic with the Crusaders, and the army of Godfrey laid waste the surrounding country. During the festival of Christmas these offensive measures were suspended, and at the end of that time the emperor recalled his edict.

Once more Alexius sent deputies to induce Godfrey to enter the city, and his refusal was followed by a second prohibition of traffic, and by further acts of retaliation on the part of the Crusaders. A body of troops then issued from the town, and attacked the camp of the Latins. The Greeks from the walls hurled darts and shot arrows upon the soldiers below, but the Crusaders, who were protected by their coats of mail, inflicted great damage upon their assailants before night closed in and put an end to the combat. Alexius was compelled, by the sufferings of his people, to give up all thoughts of hostile measures, and traffic and intercourse were resumed between the inhabitants and the Army of the Cross. Hugh of Vermandois, upon whom the blandishments of Alexius had produced their impressions, exerted himself to establish peace, and to prevail upon Godfrey to take the oath of fealty to the emperor. The Lord of Lorraine at first refused to bend the knee before this treacherous prince, but at length the arguments of Hugh produced their effect, and a son of Alexius having been sent to the Latin camp as a hostage, Godfrey entered Constantinople with his friends.

Since the conversion of the Emperor Constantine to Christianity (A.D. 323), a city of spacious squares, gorgeous palaces, and churches had been gradually growing up upon the site of the little town of Byzantium. This place was selected by Constantine as the seat of his empire, and the removal may be regarded as one of the causes which hastened the fall of Rome. After the death of Constantine, the vast empire over which his sway had extended was separated into distinct sovereignties for his sons and nephews. That portion of the Roman territory of which Constantinople was the capital gradually acquired strength and importance, and became an empire which has since been known as the *Greek*, *Eastern*, or *Byzantine* empire.

Of those splendours of the Byzantine court which had exerted so marked an influence upon the mind of the Count of Vermandois, and were now employed to dazzle the eyes of his companions in arms, we have full records in the writings of that period. Benjamin of Tudela, a Spanish Jew, who travelled through the East in the twelfth century (1159 or 1160), has given a description of what he saw at Constantinople, and speaks in glowing terms of the magnificence of the buildings and the wealth and luxury of the inhabitants.

"The King Emanuel,"* says he, "has built a grand palace for the throne or the seat of his empire, on the borders of the sea, in addition to those which were built by his ancestors. In this palace the columns and their capitals are covered with pure gold and silver, and he has caused to be graven on them all the wars which he and his ancestors have made.† There also has been erected a throne of gold and precious stones, above which hangs, by a golden chain, a crown of gold, which comes exactly upon his head when he is seated. In this crown are stones of such great price as cannot be estimated. In the night there is no need of candles, for every one is able to see by the sparkling of these jewels. There are also many other wonders, which no man could recount.

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* Manuel I., Comnenus.

† The traveller here seems to be describing some confused recollection of the column of Arcadius.

"Thither are carried every year the tributes of all Greece, whose castles are filled with dresses of silk, of purple, and gold. Nowhere else in the world do we see such buildings and such great riches. It is said that the tribute of Constantinople alone amounts to twenty thousand pieces of gold a day,* derived from imposts upon the shops, markets, and taverns, as well as that paid by merchants who repair thither from all quarters, both by land and sea. The Greek inhabitants of the country are very rich in gold and jewels. They go about in dresses of silk, fringed with gold and embroidery. To see them in this attire, mounted on their horses, one would say that they are like the sons of kings." †

In spite of the luxury which prevailed, the subjects of the Byzantine empire were the most dexterous and laborious of nations. Their country was blessed by nature with every advantage of soil, climate, and situation; and in the support and restoration of the arts their patient and peaceful temper produced results which were not to be attained amidst the warlike spirit and feudal anarchy of Europe. In the preparation of those costly dresses described by the Jewish traveller, the colours most in use were the Tyrian purple, the brilliant scarlet, and the softer lustre of the green. These colours were also used to adorn the buildings.

"There is also at Constantinople," continues Benjamin of Tudela, "the temple of St. Sophia; and the Pope of the Greeks, who are not subject to the Pope of Rome. You may count as many altars in the Temple of St. Sophia as there are days in the year. Thither are gathered immense riches from the isles, country houses, and towns of the country. There is no temple in the universe where we find such riches as are there. In the midst of this temple there are columns of gold and silver, and chandeliers of the same metals, in such numbers that we cannot count them."

A church dedicated to the Divine Wisdom (Santa Sophia) was built by Constantine in the twentieth year of his reign. This building was burnt down in the year 404, and having been rebuilt by Theodosius, was again destroyed by fire. The vast pile, which still remains one of the chief ornaments of Constantinople, and which is now used as a Mahometan mosque, dates from the reign of Justinian. That magnificent prince determined to build "the grandest monument ever erected by the hand of man." Seven years were occupied in collecting materials from every part of the world, and nine were employed in the actual building. Columns of marble from the Temples of the Sun at Palmyra and of Diana at Ephesus, bricks of perfect form and remarkable durability from the island of Rhodes, were brought at immense cost to complete the edifice. Gold and mosaics were spread over the surface, and paintings on gold and costly marbles covered the walls.

The church of St. Sophia, which once contained so many splendours, now retains within it but few traces of its former glory. The imposing proportions of the building still remain, but the walls are bare, and upon the dome the Crescent has replaced the Cross.

The narrative of Benjamin of Tudela goes on to describe a "place where the king diverts himself, called the hippodrome near to the wall of the palace.‡ There it is that every year, on the day of the birth of Jesus the Nazarene, the king gives a grand entertainment. There are represented by magic arts before the king and queen, figures of all kinds of men that exist in the world; thither also are taken lions, bears, tigers, and wild asses, which are made to fight together, as well as birds. There is no such a sight to be seen in all the world." §

According to Gibbon, the great palace, the centre of the imperial residence, was situated between the hippodrome and the church of St. Sophia; and the gardens descended by many a terrace to the shores of the Propontis. The new palace, erected in the ninth century by the Emperor

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* Having a regard to the value of money at that period, there can be no doubt that this account is exaggerated.

† Speaking of the Peloponnesus, a province, or *theme*, of the Byzantine monarchy, Gibbon says that the embroidery there produced was raised either in silk or gold; and the more simple ornament of stripes or circles was surpassed by the nicer imitation of flowers. The vestments that were fashioned for the palace or the altar often glittered with precious stones, and the figures were delineated in strings of Oriental pearls. Until the twelfth century, Greece alone, of all the countries of Christendom, possessed the silkworm.—*Decline and Fall*, chap. liii.

‡ Now called *At-Meidan*, or horse market.

§ It is possible that Benjamin was a witness of the festivals celebrated at Constantinople on the marriage of the Emperor Manuel with Mary, daughter of the Prince of Antioch, on Christmas Day, 1161.

Theophilus, was accompanied with five churches, one of which was conspicuous for size and beauty. The square before the portico of the church contained a fountain, the basin of which was lined and encompassed with plates of silver. In the beginning of each season the basin was replenished, instead of water, with the most exquisite fruits, which were abandoned to the populace for the entertainment of the prince. He enjoyed this tumultuous spectacle from a throne resplendent with gold and gems, which was raised by a marble staircase to the height of a lofty terrace. Below the throne were seated the officers of the guards, the magistrates, and the chiefs of the factions of the circus; the inferior steps were occupied by the people; the space below was covered with troops of singers, dancers, and pantomimists. The fanciful magnificence of the emperor employed, in various fantastic designs, the skill and patience of such artists as the times could afford; but the taste of Athens would have despised their frivolous and costly labours—a golden tree with its leaves and branches, which sheltered a

STATUE OF GODFREY DE BOUILLON, BRUSSELS.
(From a Photograph by Alexandre, Brussels.)

multitude of birds warbling their artificial notes, and two lions of massy gold, and of natural size, which looked and roared like their brethren of the forest.

Such were the scenes of magnificence which were presented to the view of Godfrey and his companions as they entered the Greek capital. The emperor received the great leader of the Crusade with the highest distinction, clothed him with imperial robes, and called him his son.* The character of Godfrey is shown to us in so high and noble an aspect, that it is not probable he was much affected by these flatteries; but whatever may have been his motives, he consented to do homage to the emperor, according to the feudal laws of France. Alexius now made costly presents to the Crusaders, and gave them honourable conduct from the city. After having refreshed themselves for several days, the army passed the Hellespont and encamped at Chalcedon, there to await the other divisions of the Crusade.

Soon after the departure of Godfrey from Lorraine, Bohemond, Prince of Tarentum, and his relation Tancred had quitted Italy with an immense body of troops, including 10,000 horse. While the character of Bohemond was ambitious, grasping, and unprincipled, the virtues of Tancred were unanimously extolled by the historians of the day, and have been celebrated in undying verse from the pen of Tasso.

ROBERT OF NORMANDY RALLYING THE CRUSADERS. (*See p.* 147.)

The army under these leaders landed at Durazzo and passed through Epirus to Adrianople. Although Alexius had communicated with Bohemond, promising him assistance, the Greek troops harassed the advancing forces, and various engagements took place, with considerable loss on both sides. Bohemond then, at the invitation of the emperor, visited Constantinople, leaving his army behind under Tancred. Influenced by large gifts of money and lands, Bohemond did homage to the emperor, and became one of his firmest allies.

Impressed with a sense of the humiliation of a concession which had been bought with gold, Tancred determined not to submit to similar demands. On receiving the news the young knight immediately marched his army towards Constantinople, and, crossing the Hellespont—without giving any notice of his intention—joined the forces of Godfrey at Chalcedon. Alexius made many efforts to bring back Tancred to Constantinople, and to induce him to do homage, but without success; and the attention of the emperor was presently drawn in another direction, by the arrival of Raymond of St. Gilles, Count of Toulouse, with an army of Crusaders from Languedoc.

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* The ceremony of the "adoption of honour," as it was styled, was a curious custom of the time.

Raymond, who is represented as being revengeful and avaricious, but possessing some moral firmness, in conjunction with pride, refused to pay his allegiance to the emperor. The troops of the Count of Toulouse were at a considerable distance from the army of his friends, and Alexius did not hesitate to order a night attack to be made from the city upon the French camp. The Languedocians, however, repulsed their assailants with great loss, and further negotiations, which afterwards took place, only resulted in a second refusal on the part of Raymond to pay the required homage. He, however, consented to take a vow that he would make no attempt against the life or honour of the emperor.

Alexius then changed his conduct, and invited the count to the palace, where the luxury and magnificence which surrounded him produced its effect, and Raymond remained for some time amidst the pleasures of the court. Bohemond and Godfrey, however, had already marched from Chalcedon towards Nicæa, the capital of the Turkish kingdom of Roum. On receiving the news of their departure, the Count of Toulouse quitted Constantinople and hastened to follow the main body of the army.

Another army, forming the last division of the first Crusade, soon afterwards appeared before Constantinople. Robert of Normandy had at length torn himself away from the pleasures of Italy, and had brought with him a well-appointed army, though fewer in numbers than those which had preceded him. Robert took the oath of allegiance, satisfied with the assurance that the other leaders had already done so, and his army having received supplies from the emperor, passed the Hellespont, and marched towards Nicæa, in the path of their companions.

During the successive visits of the Crusaders to Constantinople, the Greek emperor had lost no opportunity of sowing jealousies and dissensions among them. Nevertheless, during the siege of Nicæa, which was the first combined undertaking of the Army of the Cross, there seems to have been no want of harmony among the various leaders. This city, which was occupied by the Seljuk Turks, was strongly fortified by a solid wall, from which rose 350 towers.

When the Christian leaders had united their forces, and been joined by Peter the Hermit with the remnant of his multitude, their army is said to have numbered 600,000 men, exclusive of those who did not carry arms. The number of knights is estimated as having been 200,000. The Seljukian Sultan, David, had quitted his capital on the approach of the Crusaders, and having collected throughout the country a large body of horse, he made a sudden attack upon the Christian forces, but was defeated with heavy loss.

The siege of Nicæa was now pressed with vigour, but the town was obstinately defended, and many of the assailants were shot down by the arrows of the Turkish bowmen. One Turk in particular was seen to present himself repeatedly on the walls, and to deal death wherever his aim was directed. The best-aimed arrows having failed to touch him, the Christian soldiers were seized with superstitious terror, and attributed to him the possession of some supernatural power. It is related by Albert of Aix that Godfrey of Bouillon at length took a crossbow himself, though that weapon was considered as fit only for a yeoman, and having directed it against the Turkish archer, sent an arrow to his heart.

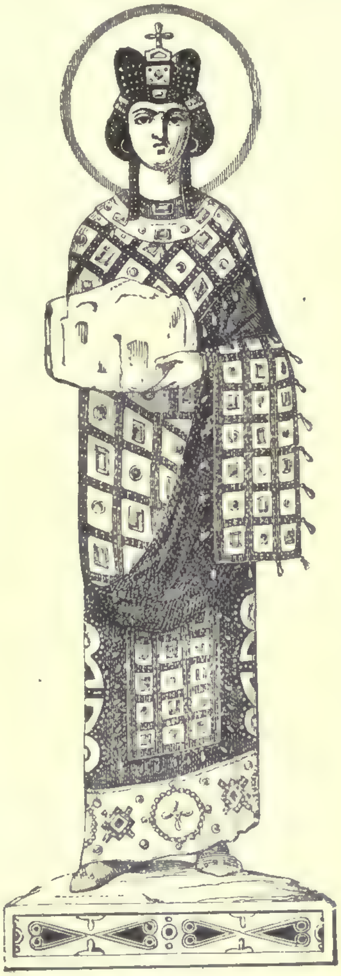
The supplies of the town were obtained from Lake Ascanius (Isnik), which lay beneath its walls, and when this circumstance was discovered by the Crusaders, they established a blockade. Alexius meanwhile had privately communicated with the Turks, who agreed to surrender the city into his hands on condition of receiving immunity and protection. When, therefore, the besieging forces expected the submission of the garrison, the imperial ensign suddenly appeared upon the walls. It had been previously determined between the emperor and the Christian leaders that on the fall of the city it should be given up to Alexius, and that the riches it contained should be distributed among the troops. The treachery of the emperor, in having forestalled this arrangement, excited the greatest indignation among the soldiers of the Crusade, and their leaders had the utmost difficulty in restraining them from that vengeance which they demanded.

The army having resumed its march, the divisions headed by Bohemond and Robert of Normandy became separated from the main body. After crossing arid plains and barren hills, they encamped for the night near Dorylæum, in a pleasant valley watered by a running stream. On the following morning they were suddenly attacked by an army of 200,000 men, who rushed down upon them from the mountains with shouts that shook the air. The Crusaders made a gallant resistance, but they had to deal with an enemy whose superiority lay not less in numbers, than in the fleetness of their steeds and the position of the ground. The Christian soldiers were mown down by flights of arrows and by the charges of the Turkish cavalry; and on being attacked simultaneously in front and rear, they gave way, and fell into confusion. The Turks forced their way into the camp of Bohemond, where they massacred the old, the women, and the helpless. At this juncture the stout heart of Robert of Normandy saved his companions from the disgrace of utter defeat. Spurring his horse among the flying troops, he uncovered his head, and through the din and confusion of the fray sounded his battle-cry of "Normandy!" "Bohemond!" he shouted, "whither fly you? Your Apulia is afar! Where go you, Tancred? Otranto is not near you! Turn upon the enemy! God wills it! God wills it!" And with these words he rallied the troops, drove back the Turks, and maintained a firm line of defence. The battle raged during many hours with great slaughter on both sides, and the Christian troops were gradually giving way before overwhelming numbers, when the Red Cross banner appeared upon the hills, and the army of Godfrey of Bouillon advanced to change the fortune of the day.

THRONE OF THE EMPEROR OF CONSTANTINOPLE.
(From a Greek MS. of the Ninth Century in the National Library, Paris.)

The Paynim host were compelled to fly in disorder, and their camp, containing much booty of food, fell into the hands of the Crusaders.

In the subsequent march through Phrygia, the Christians had to pass over a large tract of country which had been completely ravaged by the enemy. Their provisions soon became exhausted, and under the burning rays of a southern sun they found themselves without water. The accounts given by the chroniclers of the sufferings of the troops are too dreadful to be repeated. Men, women, and horses fell by thousands on the way, and perished by a lingering and painful death.

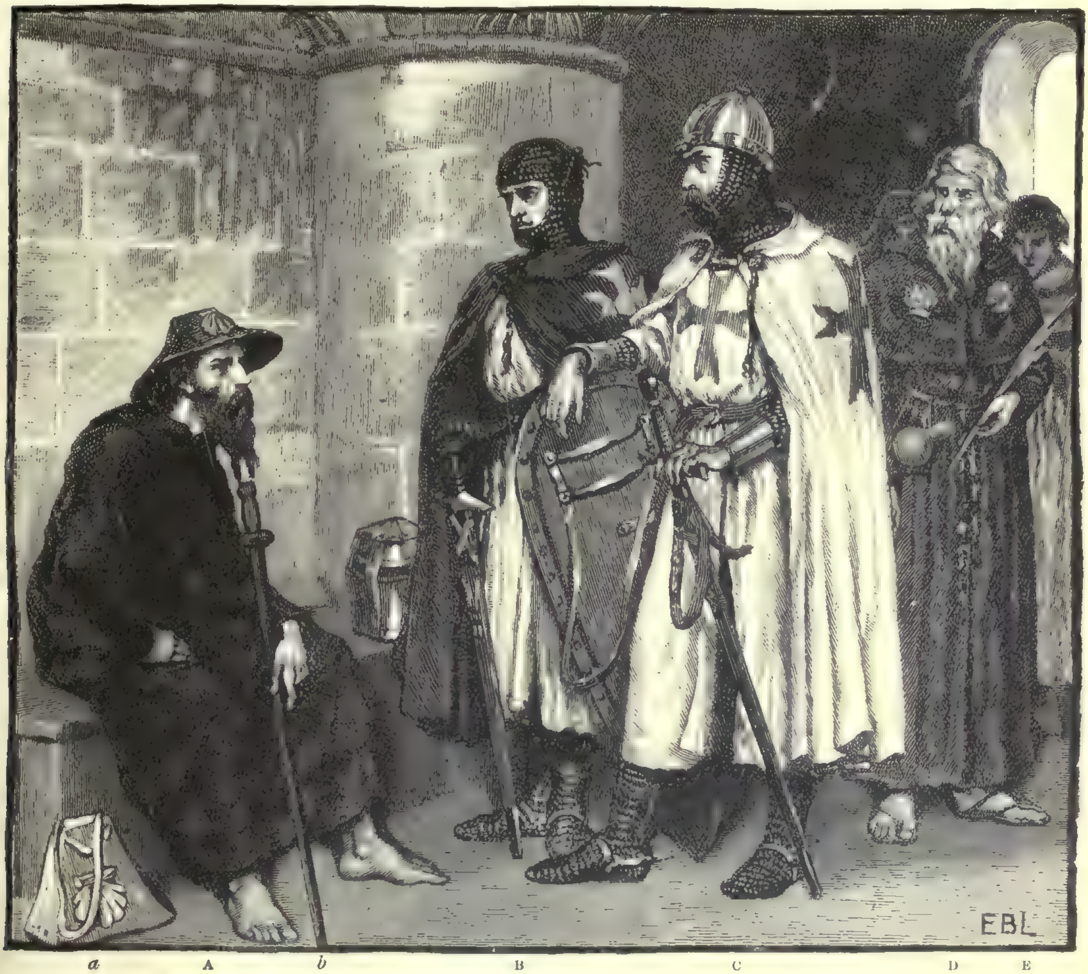


COSTUME OF EMPRESS OF CONSTANTINOPLE. *(From a Greek MS.)*

At length water was found, and the host of the Crusade reached the city of Antioch in Pisidia. Here, surrounded by a fertile district, the main body of the troops rested for a while from their fatigues, while detachments under the command of Tancred and Baldwin, brother of Godfrey Bouillon,

PROCESSION OF THE CRUSADERS ROUND THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM. *(See p. 150.)*

made incursions through the country, and became possessed of the towns of Tarsus and Mamistra. Subsequently Baldwin crossed the Euphrates, and was elected King of Edessa, in which city he remained until the conquest of the Holy Land was completed.



PILGRIM (A), HOSPITALLER (B), TEMPLAR KNIGHT (C), PALMER (D), AND CONVENTUAL TEMPLAR (E). (*See p.* 151.)
(*a, Pilgrim's wallet; b, Pilgrim's staff.*)

The great army of the Crusade continued its march through uninhabited wilds and barren mountains, and having taken possession of Artesia, advanced towards the Syrian Antioch. Situated on the hills above the river Orontes, the town of Antioch was so strongly fortified by nature as well as by art, that all efforts to take it by assault proved fruitless, and the movable towers, mangonels, battering-rams, and other engines, which were brought to bear by the besieging army, were used without effect (October 21, 1097). Meanwhile famine and disease spread their ravages in the camp without the walls, and the storms of winter proved more fatal to the troops than the arrows of the enemy. Rendered reckless by their sufferings, the soldiers cast aside all the obligations of morality; crimes of the worst description became common, and even the ties of nature were forgotten. We are told by William of Malmesbury, that such was the extremity to which the Crusaders were reduced, that many of them fed upon the dead bodies of their companions. Some of the inferior leaders deserted the army, and among these was Peter the Hermit, whose impulsive enthusiasm gave way before continued misfortunes. He, however, was brought back by Tancred, and was compelled to take a vow that he would not again abandon the enterprise until the army had reached

Jerusalem. After various encounters had taken place before the walls, during which the knights of the Crusades performed extraordinary feats of valour, the town of Antioch was betrayed in 1098 to the crafty Bohemond, and the Turkish inhabitants were slaughtered indiscriminately. But the victors found their condition very little improved by the conquest. The city was rich in booty of various kinds, but contained only a scanty store of provisions, of which the Crusaders stood most in need.

Reduced to a state of famine within the walls, the Christians found themselves attacked from without by the forces of the Persian Sultan, who had advanced to rid the country of the invaders. The army of Godfrey had the choice of giving battle to their assailants, or of perishing miserably in the city. Various means having been resorted to of arousing the superstitious feelings of the soldiers, the Christian host marched out from the gates, and began the attack. The ghastly faces of men worn down by famine and misery were lighted once more by the flame of fanaticism, and the wild multitude threw themselves with desperate vigour upon the splendidly appointed host of the Moslem.

In the midst of the contest the Crusaders saw, or thought they saw, some figures clothed in white raiment, and mounted upon white horses, advancing to their aid over the mountains. A cry was raised that the saints were coming to fight on their side; and so powerful was the effect of the enthusiasm thus produced, so terrible was the charge of the Christians upon their enemies, that the Persian host was utterly routed, and dispersed over the hills. Nearly 70,000 Turks are said to have died in the battle of Antioch, while the loss on the part of their opponents did not exceed 10,000. The Crusaders re-entered the city laden with the rich booty of the Turkish camp, in which were found provisions of all kinds, with stores of gold and arms.

While the Christian army was reposing in the midst of plenty, Hugh of Vermandois and Baldwin of Hainault were dispatched to Constantinople on a mission to the Emperor Alexius. Baldwin fell into a Turkish ambuscade, and his fate is not known; but Hugh of Vermandois arrived safely at the Byzantine court. Alexius, careless of his plighted faith, refused to send the reinforcements which were demanded, and suffered events to take their course. The Count of Vermandois having tasted once more the pleasures of ease and luxury, and wearied with the fatigues and privations of the Crusade, abandoned the cause which he had sworn to maintain, and leaving his companions in arms to their fate, returned to his estates in France.

Meanwhile a pestilence broke out in Antioch, and compelled the chiefs to separate and distribute their men in cantonments over the country. A desultory but successful warfare continued to be waged against the Turks, and many towns and fortresses fell into the hands of the Crusaders. At length, after further sufferings and much hard fighting, the remnant of the Army of the Cross arrived before Jerusalem. Of those immense armies, the flower of European chivalry, which had passed in splendid array under the walls of Constantinople, only about 50,000 men were left to reach the Holy City.

An attack was begun on the 7th of June, 1099, headed by Godfrey, Tancred, Robert of Normandy, and Robert of Flanders. The barbicans were carried, and a portion of the wall was thrown down; but such was the strength of the fortifications, and so obstinate the defence of the Turks, that it became necessary to construct engines of assault similar to those which had been used in the siege of Nicæa. Catapults and movable towers were prepared, and to these was added a machine called the "sow," made of wood, and covered with raw hides to protect it from fire The hollow space within was filled with soldiers, who, with this protection, were occupied in undermining the walls.

To secure success in the final effort of the enterprise, the leaders exerted themselves to heal the dissensions which had hitherto existed in the army, and Tancred set an example of conciliation by embracing his foe, Raymond of Toulouse, in sight of the troops. An expiatory procession, headed by the chiefs and the clergy, was made round the walls of the city, and prayers were offered up at some of the holy places in the neighbourhood for the success of the Christian arms. These demonstrations were treated by the Turks with contempt. They mocked at the procession as it passed before them, and having raised the Cross upon the walls, they threw dirt upon the sacred symbol. The anger of the Crusaders was excited to the utmost, and their interpretation of the religion of peace permitted them to mingle oaths of vengeance with the prayers for victory.

The preparations having been completed, the towers were rolled up to the walls, and the attack commenced. The chiefs of the Christian army appeared on the higher stages of the towers, and Godfrey of Bouillon himself was seen with a cross-bow in his hand directing his shafts within the

CRUSADERS ON THE MARCH.

(FROM THE PAINTING BY SIR JOHN GILBERT, R.A., P.R.W.S., IN THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM).

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town. The Turks replied by pouring out sheets of flame* and flights of arrows upon their assailants. The assault had continued for ten days without result, when the Crusaders redoubled their efforts. Some soldiers from the tower of Godfrey effected a lodgment on the walls, and were followed by the Lord of Lorraine, with Baldwin de Bourg, and other chiefs. Robert of Normandy and Tancred forced one of the gates, and the standard of the Cross was raised upon the walls of Jerusalem on the 15th of July, 1099.

The details of the massacre that ensued form one of the bloodiest pages of history. The Turks, after a vain attempt to dispute the advance of the Crusaders, fled to the mosques, and were slain before the altars. The inhabitants of the city were put to the sword without distinction, women and children sharing the fate of their husbands and their fathers. Ten thousand men are said to have been butchered in the Mosque of Omar, where they had attempted to defend themselves. Streams of blood flowed down the streets of the city, and few of the infidel race escaped the carnage. Such was the vengeance taken by the Crusaders for the persecutions suffered by the Christians in Jerusalem; such were the deeds of horror perpetrated in the name of the Saviour of mankind, as though the Majesty of Heaven could be propitiated by a libation of human blood.

It became necessary to place the safety of the Holy City in the care of one powerful chief, and Godfrey of Bouillon was elected the first King of Jerusalem. He was invested with his new dignity in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but refused to be crowned, saying that it was not fitting that he should wear a crown of gold in the city where the Saviour had been crowned with thorns. His reign lasted barely a year, and on his death his brother Baldwin was chosen to succeed him.

It does not fall within the scope of this history to trace the progress of events at Jerusalem under its Latin kings. Some account may, however, be given of the origin of two powerful orders of knighthood, which indirectly owed their origin to the First Crusade.

In the year 1048, some merchants from Amalfi obtained permission from the caliph to build a hospital at Jerusalem for the protection of pilgrims. A piece of ground near to the site of the Holy Sepulchre was assigned to them for this purpose, and a chapel and hospital were built there, the first being dedicated to St. Mary, and the second to St. John the Baptist. During the siege of Jerusalem many of the sick and wounded Crusaders were brought into the hospital; and, in gratitude for the benefits they received there, they determined to dedicate their lives to charitable acts, and to enter the Monastery of St. John. They assumed as a dress a black robe, with the figure of a white cross with eight points. Pope Pascal II. bestowed many valuable privileges upon the order, and the Poor Brothers of the Hospital of St. John became a wealthy community, famed throughout Europe. During the reign of Baldwin III. of Jerusalem, the Hospitallers resumed the sword, binding themselves by a vow to draw it only against the enemies of Christ. The order of St. John was then divided into the several classes of knights, clergy, and serving brothers. The knights were highest in rank, and commanded in battle or in the hospital; the serving brothers filled the offices of esquires, or assisted the clergy in attendance upon the sick. The vows, which were taken by all without distinction, included the duties of chastity, of obedience, and of a renunciation individually of all worldly possessions.

The order of the Red Cross Knights, or Templars, is to be referred to a different origin, though the object for which it was instituted was of a similar kind, namely, the protection of pilgrims. The military order of Knights Templars was founded by Baldwin II., King of Jerusalem, in 1118, and they first came to England in 1185. They took vows of obedience to a Grand Master whom they had appointed, and also bound themselves to purity of life, to mutual assistance, and to fight continually against the infidel, never turning back from less than four adversaries. The order was known as that of the Temple of Jerusalem. They wore a white robe, to which was attached a red cross. In addition to their great standard, which also displayed these colours, they carried in battle a banner with black and white stripes, which was intended to signify charity and kindness to their friends, and destruction to their enemies. The Knights Templars, whose rules, like those of the Hospitallers, enjoined humility and poverty, soon became the proudest and wealthiest order in Christendom; and while the Knights of St. John remained during several centuries honoured and respected for acts of benevolence, the Templars became hated and feared for their vices and their cruelty. Much of the chivalry of Europe afterwards became merged in these two orders.

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* The nature of the chemical preparation known as "Greek fire" has not been ascertained with certainty, but it is probable that naphtha was one of the principal ingredients.

CHAPTER XV.

THE REIGN OF HENRY I.

Accession of Henry I.—Robert's Delay in Italy—The Charter of Liberties—Henry's Popularity—Offers his Hand to Matilda—Her Lineage—Obstacles to the Marriage—The Church decides in Favour of it—London at this Period—Coronation of Matilda—Roger of Salisbury—The Marriage—Punishment of William's Favourites—Arrival of Robert in Normandy—Prepares to Attack Henry—Anselm's Services to Henry—Peace effected between the Brothers—Henry's Dispute with Anselm—Strange Policy of the Pope—The Dispute Settled—Death of Anselm—The Earl of Shrewsbury Outlawed—Visit of Robert to England—Campaigns in Normandy—Robert and Edgar Atheling taken Prisoners—Fate of Edgar—Captivity and Death of Robert—Normandy in Possession of Henry—The English King and his Nephew—Return of the King to England—Betrothal of Henry's Daughter Matilda to the Emperor of Germany—War with the Welsh—Death of the Queen—Renewed War in Normandy—Henry before the Council of Rheims—Battle of Brenneville—Treaty of Peace—Shipwreck and Death of the King's Son—Henry's Grief—Character of Prince William—More Trouble in Normandy—The Empress Matilda declared Successor to the Throne—Her Marriage with the Count of Anjou—Death of William of Normandy—Last Years of the King's Life—Death of Henry.

When the news of the death of William Rufus was brought to his brother Henry in the New Forest, the prince immediately set spurs to his horse and galloped to Winchester. Presenting himself before the officers in charge of the treasures of the crown, he demanded the keys; but before he had obtained them, William de Breteuil, the royal treasurer, who had followed Henry from the New Forest, arrived on the spot, and interposed his authority. De Breteuil reminded the prince of the oath of allegiance which they had both taken to Robert of Normandy, to whom also, as the eldest son of the Conqueror, the throne as well as the treasure by right belonged. A violent altercation took place, and Henry drew his sword and threatened De Breteuil with instant death unless the treasure were given up. Several nobles of the late king's court supported the demand, and the treasurer found himself compelled to abandon an opposition which proved unavailing.

Henry, whose abilities had procured him the surname of Beauclerk, or the "fine scholar," showed himself as prompt in action as skilful in design. He immediately distributed some of the jewels and money of the crown among his adherents and the clergy of Winchester, and with these gifts, and promises still more lavishly bestowed, he secured a certain degree of popularity in the city. Having been elected king by the barons who were present, he hastened to London, when he again distributed large gifts among those whose adhesion was necessary. So rapidly was all this done, that on the 5th of August, three days after his brother's death, Henry was proclaimed king, and was crowned in Westminster Abbey by Maurice, Bishop of London.

It will be remembered that, by the treaty signed at Caen between Robert of Normandy and William Rufus, the crown of England devolved upon the survivor; but while Henry was obtaining possession of the throne, Robert was not yet returned from the Holy Land. Soon after the fall of Jerusalem, the Duke of Normandy had quitted Palestine and landed in Italy. Here he was received with high honour and welcome by the Norman barons who had conquered large possessions in that southern land. Passing through Apulia, he was entertained at the castle of the Count of Conversane, who was a relation of Robert Guiscard. The count received his guest with the utmost hospitality, and all the resources of a princely establishment were placed at his command. It is not surprising that these pleasures should attract a man like the Duke of Normandy, who had just escaped from the protracted hardships of the Crusade. But the Count of Conversane had a daughter; she was young, accomplished, and of great beauty. Robert fell in love with the Lady Sibylla, and obtained her hand in marriage. Ignorant of the critical position of affairs in England, and probably troubling himself little about the future, the Duke of Normandy lingered in Italy, while his more ambitious brother was securing himself in the sovereignty he had usurped.

The English people are said to have been inclined in favour of Henry, from the circumstance of his having been born and educated in England. The advantage he thus possessed was improved to the utmost, and the new king exerted himself to obtain the goodwill of that portion of his subjects who, however trodden down and oppressed by the arrogant Norman barons, were, in fact, the strength and sinew of the nation. A charter of liberties was passed, in which Henry bound himself to restore the laws of Edward the Confessor—

that is, the old customs of the country—and promised to restrict himself to his just claims over his tenants, making the same agreement binding in turn upon his tenants towards their vassals. This charter was the cause of great rejoicing among the people, and though the effects produced by it were less advantageous than was expected, it is remarkable as having supplied the groundwork for that more important concession which was afterwards obtained from King John.

These measures gave to Henry a greater popularity than had been enjoyed by either of his predecessors. The nation had no fears of foreign invasion. Some of the most pressing grievances had been redressed, and hopes were given of the removal of others; and although several generations had to pass away before the distinction of Norman and Saxon was entirely to merge into the general name of Englishman, the process had already commenced—a process which, rousing the slumbering English from the lethargy of years, and stimulating the energetic principles of the Norman character to their highest development, ultimately gave birth to a series of events which placed England foremost in the rank of nations.

GREAT SEAL OF HENRY I.

Such was the state of affairs when the new king, rejecting all thoughts of an alliance with any of the princely families of the Continent, as the crowning act of reconciliation with his English subjects, offered his hand to the exiled and portionless daughter of Malcolm Canmore, a humble novice in the Abbey of Romsey, but the representative of a long and illustrious line of English princes.

We have seen how, on the death of Edward the Confessor, Harold obtained possession of the crown, and have recorded his defeat and death, and the flight of Edgar—"the noble child," as the English chroniclers fondly term him—with his mother and sisters to Scotland. The results of his voyage, and the marriage of his sister Margaret with the King of Scotland, have been already related.

Six children arrived at years of maturity. Edward, who was slain with his father at Alnwick; Edgar, Alexander, and David, who each in turn succeeded to the crown. The daughters were named Mary, who married Eustace, Count of Boulogne; and Matilda, or Maud, afterwards queen of Henry I.

The death of Malcolm and his eldest son, which occurred in 1093, was soon followed by that of Margaret. The brother of Malcolm assumed the crown, to the exclusion of his three nephews; and to this cause we may doubtless attribute the sending of Matilda, together with her sister, to the care of their aunt Christina, who had taken the veil in 1086.

As Matilda grew towards womanhood, more than one Norman chieftain had endeavoured to obtain her hand in marriage; but on preferring their request to William Rufus, that politic monarch had refused his consent. He did not wish to see an English princess, a lineal descendant of Alfred the Great, allied to any man whose power or abilities might enable him to aspire to the throne. Matilda, therefore, remained in the seclusion of the cloister until King Henry sent to her his proposals of marriage. It is related that the young princess received the offer with dislike if not with disdain. She was not ignorant of the sufferings which the Norman invasion had brought upon her countrymen, and her sympathy with their sorrows induced a hatred of their oppressors. Her friends and attendants, however, combated these scruples, and argued that, by her consent, she might restore, in some degree, the safety and happiness of the people, while her refusal would certainly tend to increase the enmity between the Norman and English races. It is one of the penalties attached to royalty that those connections which, in a lower and happier sphere of life, are matters of choice and affection, become among princes mere questions of State policy. Matilda felt herself unable to resist the arguments brought forward in favour of the match, and she gave an unwilling consent. An opposition on the other side, meanwhile, arose among the Norman adherents of Henry, who were ill-disposed to have an English queen to reign over them, and were probably jealous of the effect such a marriage would produce among the people in the king's favour.

It was asserted that the chosen wife of the king was already the bride of Heaven; that she had been seen to wear the veil of a nun, which shut her out for ever from the world.

In this difficulty it was necessary for Henry to procure the assistance of the clergy, and, wishing to obtain the support of the Church against Robert, he sent messengers to Anselm entreating him to return to England, and resume the see of Canterbury. The king promised to restore the privileges of the Church, and to submit to its authority. Anselm acceded to the request, and agreed to perform the marriage ceremony; but when he heard the reports in circulation that Matilda had taken the veil, he declared that the matter required to be investigated, and that he would himself examine the princess on the subject.

On the question being put to her, Matilda denied that she had ever been dedicated to a religious life, or had worn the veil of her own consent. The reason she gave for having been made to do so at particular times gives a striking picture of the lawlessness and brutality of the Norman soldiery. "I confess," she said, "that I have sometimes appeared veiled, but the cause was this:—In my youth I was under the care of my aunt Christina. She, in order to preserve me from the Normans, by whose licentiousness the honour of all women was threatened, was accustomed to throw a piece of black stuff over my head; and when I refused to wear it, she treated me with great harshness. In her presence, therefore, I wore that veil, but when she was away, I used to throw it on the ground, and trample upon it in childish anger."*

Anselm convoked a council of nobles and ecclesiastics, who assembled in the city of Rochester, and to whom the evidence given by Matilda was submitted. Witnesses were examined in support of her assertions, and the assembly decided that the princess was free to dispose of her person in marriage. They cited, as an authority for this decision, the judgment of Archbishop Lanfranc, who, at a time when some English women had taken refuge in a convent from fear of the soldiers of the Conqueror, permitted them to regain their liberty.

At the time of the coronation of Matilda, the city of London could not have presented much to attract the eye. The convents were few, and the churches humble. The tall spire, rising like an aspiration towards heaven; the richly traceried window; the carved portal, did not yet exist to form a picturesque contrast with the rude, low houses built in irregular lines.

The Thames, crossed by one poor wooden bridge, was not then, as now, crowded by a fleet of merchantmen. At the Tower, the Vintry, and Edred's-hithe, a few small vessels, indeed, might be anchored; and from time to time some tall Norman galley might glide over its silvery waters.

On either side of the city, and close to the water's edge, stood the important fortresses of the Tower and Castle Baynard, whilst a rude collection of huts, of the poorest description, formed that general receptacle of thieves and outlaws, the Borough. Close to them stood the convent and church of St. Mary, and far beyond, on the same side of the river, rising above the marshes which surrounded it, might be seen the towers of the palace of Lambeth.

As the procession moved on, the eyes of the princess encountered a fairer spectacle; for, on quitting the village of Charing, she entered the broad but irregular road which led to the palace of Westminster, the residence of the sovereign of England. There the hand of improvement, guided by art, had lavished enormous sums of money both on church and hall. The abbey, which had been raised by the pious exertions of the Confessor, was probably no ignoble edifice.

Beside the primate was a churchman of a very different character, Roger, the king's chancellor, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury. The history of his progress under royal favour is strikingly characteristic of the man and the times in which he flourished. At the period when Henry was fighting under the banner of his brother, William Rufus, with a troop of mercenaries whom he headed, they entered a church near Caen, and requested the priest whom they found there to say a mass as quickly as possible. This priest was Roger, who promptly complied with their request, and hurried over the service in so rapid a manner that they unanimously declared that it would be impossible to find a priest more suitable for a soldier's chaplain. In this new office Roger acquitted himself so well, that Henry, on his accession, advanced him to the chancellorship, and in 1107 to the see of Salisbury. He became one of the ablest financiers of the age, and a great builder of churches and castles.

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* Eadmer.

Of the principal nobles of England and Normandy, it is probable that only a few were present. Some were in the Holy Land with Robert; others, dissatisfied at the usurpation of his younger brother, remained in their respective castles, silently preparing to assert the right of the lawful heir to the throne. Amongst those, however, who adhered to Henry, was the famous Roger de Bigod, who had obtained vast possessions both in Norfolk and Suffolk; whilst another devoted friend of the king was the powerful Earl of Chester, lord of the Welsh marches, and commonly called Hugh Lupus, on account of his turbulent disposition.

The marriage was celebrated on the 12th of November, 1100, and the queen was crowned amidst the acclamations of the people. Previous to the ceremony, Anselm, who wished to leave no room for slanderous reports, and to remove all doubts of the lawfulness of the marriage, mounted a platform before the church door, and explained the question which had been disputed, and the decision of the council, to the assembled people.

The Normans, however, who had raised the opposition to the marriage, and many of whom were secret adherents of Duke Robert, vented their ill-humour in bitter railleries and jests. They gave Henry the nickname of Godric, and his queen they called Godiva—names which were English, and were applied in derision. It is related by an old historian that Henry heard all these things, but that he dissembled his anger, and pretended to laugh heartily at the jests.

Soon after his marriage the king commenced proceedings against several of the most vicious of his brother's favourites, whom he despoiled of their ill-gotten possessions, and either expelled from the country, or threw promptly into prison. During the time he had been attached to his brother's court, Henry had taken part in the debaucheries which prevailed there; and it is probable that the punishment of his former associates was dictated, not by any regard for the interests of virtue, but rather from a deference to the wishes of the people; while, at the same time, he was enabled to fill the royal coffers with the treasures of the banished lords. Foremost among the proscribed was Randolf Flambard, the minister of Rufus, who had been made Bishop of Durham, and had amassed large possessions by extortion, and by selling justice. Flambard was seized and thrown into the Tower, whence he effected his escape, by means of a rope which was conveyed to him by some of his friends in a flagon of wine. Having made his way to the coast, he crossed the Channel, and entered the service of Robert of Normandy.

When Robert at length returned to his dukedom with his bride Sibylla, he was received with acclamation by the inhabitants, and soon expressed the intention of enforcing his claim to the crown of England; but, with his accustomed procrastination, he took no immediate steps to that end, but occupied his time with feasts and tournaments. When at length he was aroused to enter upon the expedition he had planned, he was supported not only by the resident Norman barons, but also by many of those who had settled in England, and who agreed to join their forces to his standard. Among these were the Earl of Surrey William de Warrenne, Robert de Pontefract, Hugh de Grantmesnil, Robert de Malet, and Robert de Belesme, Earl of Shrewsbury.

On the other hand, Henry was strong in the support of the English people, and a party of the Norman nobility. Archbishop Anselm, with other prelates, rendered the king important service, and secured to Henry the support of the Pope. There is no doubt whatever that Anselm was a conscientious man, and that if he adhered to the cause of the younger brother, he did so from a sincere desire to establish the liberties of the people, and from a conviction that the rule of Henry, who had pledged himself to promote the welfare of his subjects, was preferable to that of the weak and luxurious Duke of Normandy.

Henry fitted out a fleet for the purpose of intercepting the duke in his voyage across the Channel; but the English sailors, from some cause which has not been entirely explained, deserted from their allegiance, and carried the ships over to the service of Robert.

ROBERT OF NORMANDY PAYING COURT TO THE LADY SIBYLLA. (*See p.* 152.)

Robert landed with his army at Portsmouth (1101), and was immediately joined by many barons and knights of Norman birth; the clergy, however, and the populace remained faithful to the cause of the king. Several days elapsed before the rival forces came within sight of each other; and in the meanwhile some of the Norman barons acted as mediators between the two brothers, and succeeded in arranging terms of peace. Robert agreed to resign his claim to the crown of England for a yearly pension of two thousand pounds of silver; and it was decided that the adherents of either side should be pardoned, and that their possessions, confiscated by the king or the duke, should be at once restored. A clause was also added, to the effect that whichever of the two brothers might survive the other, should succeed to his title and dominions. The effusion of blood was thus stayed for the moment, and Robert returned with his army to Normandy (1102).

Finding himself securely in possession of the throne, Henry was disposed to revoke some of the concessions which he had made to Anselm for the purpose of securing the support of that prelate. The king demanded that he should do homage for the archbishopric of Canterbury; and Anselm having returned a decided refusal, a dispute arose which lasted over several years. In the first instance, the question was referred to the Pope, Pascal II., who decided that all ecclesiastics should enter the Church without the authority of laymen, of however high degree. Henry persisted in maintaining his prerogative, and required Anselm either to do homage or once more to quit the kingdom. The archbishop remained firm; and the king, who did not desire an open rupture with the Church, sent three bishops to Rome to negotiate with the Pope. Anselm, at the same time, sent two monks as messengers of his own. It is stated by Eadmer, the biographer of Anselm, that the Pope had recourse to a strange expedient to evade the difficulty in which he found himself. He refused to communicate with the three bishops in writing, but informed them verbally that he ceded the right of investiture to the king; while he gave letters to the two monks, in which he supported

MARRIAGE OF HENRY I. AND MATILDA. (*See p.* 155.)

the opposition of Anselm, and desired him to continue that course of action.

On the return of the messengers to London, an assembly was convened, at which they delivered the report of their journey. The word of the three bishops was accepted by the king in preference to the written testimony produced by the monks; and though the Pope affirmed that the evidence of the bishops was false, and, moreover, excommunicated them as liars, Henry stoutly pursued his own line of policy, and invested new bishops with the sees of Hereford and Salisbury. Anselm obtained permission to proceed himself to Rome for the purpose of terminating the dispute (1103).

The archbishop remained abroad several years, during which negotiations were carried on. In 1106 a compromise was agreed to, by the terms of which the more important parts of the investiture—the oaths of fealty and homage—were retained by the king; while the Pope was content with the merely symbolic presentation of the ring and crozier. Upon these lines the question, which had long agitated Europe, was afterwards settled at Worms between Calixtus II. and the Emperor Henry V.

After the return of Anselm, a number of canons were passed by a council of the Church, enforcing upon the clergy the obligation of celibacy. Lanfranc had previously exerted himself to promote this object, though with only partial success; and Anselm now undertook to enforce the same measures. Those priests who were married were commanded to separate from their wives, whom they were never again to see, except in the presence of witnesses. Any who should refuse compliance were to be excommunicated and deposed from the order.

In the year 1109 Anselm died at the age of seventy-six. He was a man of very great ability and erudition, the evidences of which may be found in his writings, which are still extant. He exerted himself to establish schools, and to promote the spread of knowledge throughout the country, and the news of his death was received with general regret among the people. He represented in saintliness, administrative powers, and political foresight the highest ideals of mediæval Christendom.

The treaty which had been signed between Henry and Robert in no degree affected the policy of the king, who showed himself as unscrupulous and careless of his plighted faith as had been his brother Rufus. Determined to punish those barons who had supported the Duke of Normandy, and whose power and position rendered their disaffection a matter to be dreaded, Henry took measures calculated to excite them to some overt act of rebellion, which should enable him to proceed against them without the shame of a direct violation of the treaty. The first who became the object of attack was Robert de Belesme, Earl of Shrewsbury, who held large possessions in Normandy as well as in England. De Belesme was summoned before the general assembly held in the king's palace, to answer forty-five charges which were brought against him. On appearing before the council, the earl, according to the custom of the time, demanded leave to go and consult with his friends respecting his accusation and the conduct of his defence. The permission having been granted, the earl immediately quitted the court, took horse, and galloped off to one of his fortified castles.

The king and the council having waited in vain for his answer to the charges, made proclamation of outlawry against him, and declared him a public enemy unless he returned and appeared before the court at its next sitting. Robert de Belesme made no answer to the summons, but prepared energetically for war, and collected large stores of provisions in his castles of Arundel, Shrewsbury, and Tickhill. Bridgenorth, on the frontier of Wales, was also strongly fortified.

Henry advanced against his rebellious vassal with an army, a great part of which was composed of English troops, who marched with alacrity to punish the proud Norman baron. After having obtained possession of the castle of Arundel, Henry marched against Bridgenorth, where the earl had entrenched himself. For several weeks the king besieged the town without result, when some of the Norman barons undertook to arrange terms of peace, as they had already done in the case of Robert of Normandy.

Many of the barons waited upon King Henry, and demanded a conference, or *parlement*, for the purpose of preparing terms of peace. The plain on which the assembly met was bounded by hills, on which were posted a large body of English troops. These, who had been informed of the object of the conference, called out loudly to the king, "Place no faith in them, King Henry; they want to lay a snare for you: we will give thee our assistance, and will follow thee to the assault. Make no peace with the traitor until he falls into thy hands." The warning appears to have produced its effect, and no reconciliation took place between the belligerents. The fortress of Bridgenorth at length capitulated, and the king's forces marched through a densely-wooded country to attack the earl in his stronghold of Shrewsbury. A short interval elapsed, and then this fortress also was taken; and Earl Robert, who was made a prisoner was banished from the country, with the forfeiture of the whole of his estates. Other nobles, who had adhered to the cause of Robert of Normandy, were afterwards prosecuted, and met with a similar fate to that of the Earl of Shrewsbury.

The English troops of Henry had long sought for an opportunity of vengeance upon the oppressors of their country, and they might not unreasonably feel elated at the victories they had obtained over the Norman insurgents. It does not appear, however, that the nation at large derived any benefit from the suppression of the rebellion. Although Henry was bred in England, and had married an English wife, his sympathies were not with the people whom he governed. The old historians tell us that the good Queen Matilda used all the influence she possessed to advance the happiness and secure the liberties of her countrymen; but her counsel and entreaties do not seem to have produced any effect upon the conduct of the king. The condition of the people soon after the marriage of Henry with Matilda is thus described in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle :—"It is no easy matter to relate all the miseries with which the land was at this time afflicted, by unjust and continual exactions. Wherever the king went, those in his train oppressed the people, and were guilty of murder and incendiary fires in many places."

Alarmed for the safety of his adherents, Robert, without hesitation, came over to England, accompanied only by a small escort, and placed himself unreservedly in his brother's power for the purpose of pleading the cause of the proscribed nobles.

At this time Robert resigned his pension of two thousand pounds. According to some historians, he was detained by Henry as a prisoner, and the pension was the price paid by the duke for his liberty; while another account states that the sum was given as a present to the Queen Matilda. It is, however, certain that Robert soon returned to Normandy without having succeeded in the object of his visit.

The Duke of Normandy was ill-fitted to restrain the excesses of his turbulent barons, or to hold with a firm hand the reins of government. Many disorders sprang up in his duchy, and were left unnoticed or unpunished by the sovereign. The fair Sibylla died in 1102, and since that time the duke had resumed his irregular way of life, and had shown more completely than ever his utter incapacity for the management of public affairs.

King Henry took advantage of this state of things to interfere in the disputes of the Norman barons; and, after appearing for a time in the character of a mediator, he at length threw off the mask, and declared himself the protector of the duchy against the maladministration of his brother. He summoned Robert to give up possession of the duchy in return for an annual payment of money. The duke indignantly refused to comply with the demand, and Henry prepared to dispossess his brother by force.

In the year 1105 the king entered Normandy with an army, and captured several castles and fortified places. Robert, however, was not without means of defence; some few nobles of power and influence still remained attached to his cause, and Henry returned to England, having added Caen and Bayeux to his possessions.

A second campaign was opened in the following year, and Henry crossed the Channel with a more formidable armament than before. He appeared before Tenchebrai, an important stronghold, situated at a few leagues' distance from Mortain. Having in vain attempted to corrupt the garrison with gold, the king laid siege to the castle with his whole army. Messengers came to Robert with the news that his troops were hard pressed by the enemy, and the duke promised that, in defiance of every obstacle, he would come on a certain day to their assistance. The promise was redeemed; and, at the time appointed, the duke, with a small but gallant band of troops, attacked the army of his brother. Placing himself at the head of his knights he dashed in upon the English infantry, which gave way before him in disorder. So impetuous was the charge, that the fortune of the day seemed likely to be in favour of Robert, when the cowardice or treachery of the Earl of Shrewsbury turned the tide of affairs. De Belesme, whose troops formed an important division of the army of the duke, suddenly fled from the field. A panic ensued among the Normans, and the brilliant deeds of valour performed by their leader failed to restore their courage or to secure the victory. After a desperate resistance, Robert was taken prisoner, with many of the chief nobles who had fought under his banner.

Edgar Atheling, who was serving in the Norman army, also fell into the hands of Henry. At the instance of the queen, his niece, a pension was granted to him, and he is related to have passed the rest of his days on a small farm in England, where he lived in obscurity, and no historian has noted the time of his death or the place of his burial.

In 1106 a harder fate was reserved for the Duke of Normandy. He was confined in Cardiff Castle, which stood near to that of Gloucester, and had recently been conquered from the Welsh. At first some degree of liberty was permitted to him, and he was allowed to take exercise among the fields and woods of the neighbourhood. On one occasion, however, he made an attempt to escape on horseback, but was pursued and taken in a marsh, which he had attempted to cross in his flight. It is related by some historians that, to prevent the possibility of another attempt of the same kind, the king ordered his brother's sight to be destroyed by a painful operation. In this miserable condition, with light and liberty alike shut out, the once gay and gallant Duke of Normandy lingered on for twenty-eight years, without quitting his prison. He died in 1135.

After the victory of Tenchebrai the whole of Normandy fell into the hands of Henry. Rouen, the capital, submitted without resistance to the conqueror, and the town of Falaise capitulated after a siege of short duration. Among the prisoners taken at Falaise was William, the son of Robert and Sibylla. Some feeling of pity seems to have entered the breast of the king when his nephew, then a child of five years old, was brought before him. He committed the prince to the care of Hélie de St. Saen, a Norman nobleman of high character, who had married a natural daughter of Robert. Soon afterwards, however, Henry attempted to secure the person of his nephew, and sent a body of troops to the castle of St. Saen for that purpose. Hélie, who feared some evil intention on the part of the king, effected his escape, and carried his young charge to the court of Louis VI., King of France. On the way Hélie passed some time at the courts of the most powerful Norman barons, and at that of Fulk, Count of Anjou, by whom, as well as by Louis, the prince was received with kindness and protection. He was brought up in the palace of the French king, who, as he grew up, presented him with horses and the harness of a knight, while Fulk promised to give him his daughter Sibylla in marriage.

Louis, who dreaded the power of the King of England, saw the advantage he might obtain by supporting the legitimate claims of William Clito, or William of Normandy, as he was afterwards called. In the name of the young prince, he entered into a league with the chiefs of some of the neighbouring states, among whom was the Count of Flanders. Henry was attacked at various points along the frontiers of Normandy, and some of his fortresses and towns were taken. At the same time, many Norman barons, who were secretly attached to the cause of Duke Robert, engaged in a conspiracy against Henry. At length the king succeeded by policy in dissolving the league against him. A treaty was signed, by which the estates of Hélie de St. Saen were given to Fulk of Anjou, to whose daughter, Matilda, Henry agreed to marry his own son, William. The contract of marriage between Sibylla and the son of Robert was broken off, and the cause of the latter was no longer to be supported by the Count of Anjou. William of Normandy retired to the court of Baldwin, Count of Flanders, who was one of the warmest supporters of his cause.

Having brought these negotiations satisfactorily to an end—for which purpose he had spent two years in Normandy—Henry returned to England. The sums expended by the king in procuring the submission of the friends of William were obtained by heavy burdens and exactions from the people of England. Each year is described as being attended with its peculiar calamity, and in the year 1110 the sufferings of the people were heavy, "caused by the failure of the crops and the taxes demanded by the king for the dowry of his daughter."*

This daughter, who bore her mother's name of Matilda, was then only seven years old. By the feudal laws the king was entitled to levy a tax on the marriage of his eldest daughter, and Matilda was betrothed to Henry V., Emperor of Germany, who had sent ambassadors to demand her hand. The nominal rank of the German emperor was high, but the country over which he ruled was poor, and the prince himself not unfrequently kept state with empty coffers. He demanded a large dowry, which, after some delay, was seized rather than collected from the English people, and the young princess was committed to the hands of the ambassadors, who conducted her "with all honour" to Germany, where she was to receive her education. Her embarkation was a splendid sight, and is described in glowing terms by contemporary historians, but the people could not forget "how dear all this had cost the English nation,"† and Matilda's unpopularity in after years might in some degree be traced to the circumstances which had attended her marriage.

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* Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

† *Ibid.*

About the year 1111 the Welsh made incursions into the English counties on their borders, and overran the whole of Cheshire, causing great distress and damage to the inhabitants. Henry advanced against them, and as they retreated before him he followed them to the fastnesses of the mountains, defeating them whenever he could find an opportunity of engaging them in battle. As had been the case with his father, the Conqueror, and his brother Rufus, Henry found himself unable to subdue a people whose home was among trackless mountains and dangerous morasses, and he contented himself with building a chain of forts or castles a little farther into the country than those erected by his predecessors. He also brought over a number of Flemings, to whom he gave a district of Pembrokeshire, with the town of Haverfordwest. These people were at once industrious and warlike, and they maintained themselves in prosperity in their new colony, in spite of repeated attacks made upon them by the Welsh.

DUKE ROBERT'S SON BEFORE KING HENRY. *(See p. 160.)*

On May 1, 1118, Queen Matilda died, "with the sad reflection that she had sacrificed herself for her race in vain."* Of this unhappy lady the historians of the time record no acts which were not gentle and womanly; and she appears to have merited the affection of the people, and that title of "the Good" which they conferred upon her. For the last twelve years of her life she was neglected by her husband, and lived in the palace of Westminster, surrounded by the pomp and state of royalty, but not the less friendless and alone. She passed much of her time engaged in exercises of devotion, and it is related of her that her chief recreation consisted in listening to the songs and the stories of minstrels, whom the spirit of chivalry prompted to offer their tribute to her virtues and misfortunes.

Meanwhile, a dangerous confederacy was forming on the Continent among the adherents of William of Normandy. Henry had neglected, in almost every instance, to perform the promises which he had made to the Norman barons; and he had refused to conclude the match which had been agreed upon between his son William and the daughter of Fulk, Count of Anjou. Louis of France, who still extended his favour and support to the son of Robert, entered into a league with Fulk of Anjou and Baldwin of Flanders, for the purpose of wresting the dukedom of Normandy from the possession of Henry. The first campaign was favourable to the arms of the English king, who successfully defended his territory against the attacks of the allies. Louis then determined to demand the assistance of the ecclesiastical power. A council of the clergy was convoked at Rheims, at which the Pope, Calixtus II., was present; and thither the King of France carried the young prince, and presenting him to the council, craved its assistance on his behalf. Louis addressed an eloquent speech to the Pope, in which he dwelt upon the unjust and merciless character of the King of England, who not only refused to his nephew those possessions which belonged to him of right, but also retained his brother, the Duke of Normandy, in solitary and endless imprisonment. Henry, who had been apprised of the purpose of the council, sent costly presents to the Pope and the clergy, and subsequently had an interview with Calixtus, at which similar inducements were employed with success. The council looked coldly on the suit of Louis, and refused him the assistance he demanded.

The friends of William of Normandy continued the war with vigour, and Henry experienced several reverses. At the siege of Eu, Baldwin, Count of Flanders, the most energetic and determined of the allies, was killed; and finding himself thus freed from one formidable foe, Henry determined to get rid of another by means which, on a former occasion, had proved efficacious. He sent messengers to the Count of Anjou, proposing that the marriage between his son and the count's daughter should take place immediately; a bribe of money was also added. The count accepted the terms, withdrew his forces from those of the King of France, and the marriage was soon afterwards celebrated.

The cause of the allies now rapidly lost ground. The less powerful barons, wearied with the ill success of their arms, or induced by presents, which were distributed with a lavish hand by Henry, deserted one after the other, until the French king was left to sustain the struggle almost alone. During the desultory warfare which was carried on between the opposing forces, an engagement took place which has been honoured with the title of the battle of Brenneville, and which has been cited as a curious example of the mode of warfare common at that time.

Louis having laid a scheme for surprising the town of Noyon, Henry marched to the relief of the place, and encountered a portion of the French army at Brenneville (1119). On the side of the French were four hundred knights, while King Henry was attended by somewhat more than that number. William of Normandy, at the head of a body of the French, made a gallant charge upon his opponents, and penetrated through their ranks to the place where Henry was standing. The English king was struck on the head by Crispin, a Norman soldier, who had followed the fortunes of William. Henry, however, was rather excited than injured by the blow, and he struck his adversary to the ground, following up his advantage with other feats of gallantry. By this means he encouraged his troops, and after an obstinate conflict, the French were beaten off, with the loss of their standard and one hundred and forty knights, who were taken prisoners. The number of dead in this engagement amounted only to two, or, as some say, to three knights. At this period the cavalry were encased in heavy armour, which almost secured the wearers from blows of sword or lance, while, according to the usages of chivalry, all knights, on whichever side they fought, were regarded as one brotherhood, and the object aimed at in battle was not to despatch an adversary, but to take him prisoner.

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* Sir James Mackintosh.

These circumstances account for the number of dead being unusually small as compared with the number engaged; though in the battle of Brenneville the proportion of the former seems to be less than in any other engagement on record.

The battle of Brenneville was followed by a treaty of peace, which was arranged by the intervention of the Pope Calixtus, between Louis and Henry. By this treaty, the interests of William Fitz-Robert were entirely set aside, and the whole of the duchy of Normandy was to remain in the hands of Henry, whose son William was to render homage to Louis for the possession of the duchy. By this means the King of England evaded the declaring of himself a vassal of the King of France—an act which, as Duke of Normandy, he was called upon to perform.

Henry carried his son William into Normandy, where he received his first arms, and was acknowledged as King Henry's successor by the barons. He also obtained the hand of the daughter of Fulk of Anjou. The bride was a child of twelve years old, and the prince had but just passed his eighteenth year. These various matters being accomplished, and peace established on a tolerably secure footing, King Henry prepared to return to England (1120).

The fleet was assembled at Barfleur, and at the moment when the king was about to embark, a man named Thomas Fitz-Stephen advanced to speak with him, and offering a mark of gold, said, "Stephen, the son of Erard, my father, served all his life thy father by sea, and he steered the vessel which carried the duke to the conquest of England. My lord the king, I pray thee to appoint me to the same office. I have a ship called *La Blanche Nef*,* which is well rigged and fully manned." The king answered that, as regarded himself, the choice of a ship was already made, but that he would entrust the petitioner with the care of his two sons and his daughter, with the nobles and attendants of their train. The vessel in which Henry embarked then set sail with a fair wind, and reached the English coast in safety on the following morning. On board the *Blanche Nef* were the prince, his half-brother Richard, and their sister the Lady Marie, or Adela, Countess of Perche, with other nobles of England and Normandy, to the number of 140 persons, besides fifty sailors. Before setting sail three casks of wine were distributed among the crew by the prince's order; and several hours were spent carousing, during which many of the crew drank themselves "out of their wits." After nightfall, and when the moon had risen brightly, the vessel left her moorings, and proceeded with a soft and favourable breeze along the coast. Fifty skilful rowers propelled her on her way, and the helm was held by Fitz-Stephen. The sailors, excited by wine, pulled stoutly, so as to overtake the vessel of the king, when suddenly they found themselves entangled among some rocks off Barfleur, then called the Ras de Catte, and now known as the Ras de Catteville. The *Blanche Nef* struck on one of the rocks, and immediately began to fill. The cry of terror which broke from the startled revellers passed through the calm night air, and reached the king's ship at a distance of several miles. Those who heard it, however, little suspected its meaning, and passed on their way unconscious of the catastrophe which had taken place so near to them.

As the ship struck, the stout-hearted captain hastily lowered a boat, and placing the prince with a few of his friends therein, entreated him to make for the shore without delay. The devotion of Fitz-Stephen was, however, without avail. William heard the screams of his sister Marie, who had been left on board the vessel, and he commanded the boat to be put back to save her. When the order was obeyed, the terrified passengers threw themselves into the boat in such numbers that the frail bark was immediately upset, and all who were in it perished. In a few moments more the ship was also engulfed beneath the waters. The only trace which remained of the wreck was the main-yard, to which two men clung with the tenacity of despair; one of these was a butcher of Rouen, named Berauld, and the other a young man of higher birth, named Godfrey, the son of Gilbert de l'Aigle.

Fitz-Stephen, the captain, after falling into the water, rose to the surface, and swam towards the two men who were clinging to the spar. "The king's son!" he cried, "what has become of him?" "We have seen nothing of him," was the reply; "neither he nor any of his companions have appeared above water." "Woe is me!" the captain exclaimed, and sank to rise no more. It was in the month of November, and the coldness of the water fast numbed the limbs of the younger of the two survivors, who at length let go his hold, and committing his companion to the mercy of Heaven, disappeared beneath the waves. Berauld, the butcher, the poorest of all those who had set sail in the *Blanche Nef*, was the only one who survived to tell the story of the shipwreck. Wrapped in his sheepskin coat, he supported himself until daybreak, when he was seen by some fishermen, who rescued him from his perilous situation. This occurred on the 26th of November, 1120.

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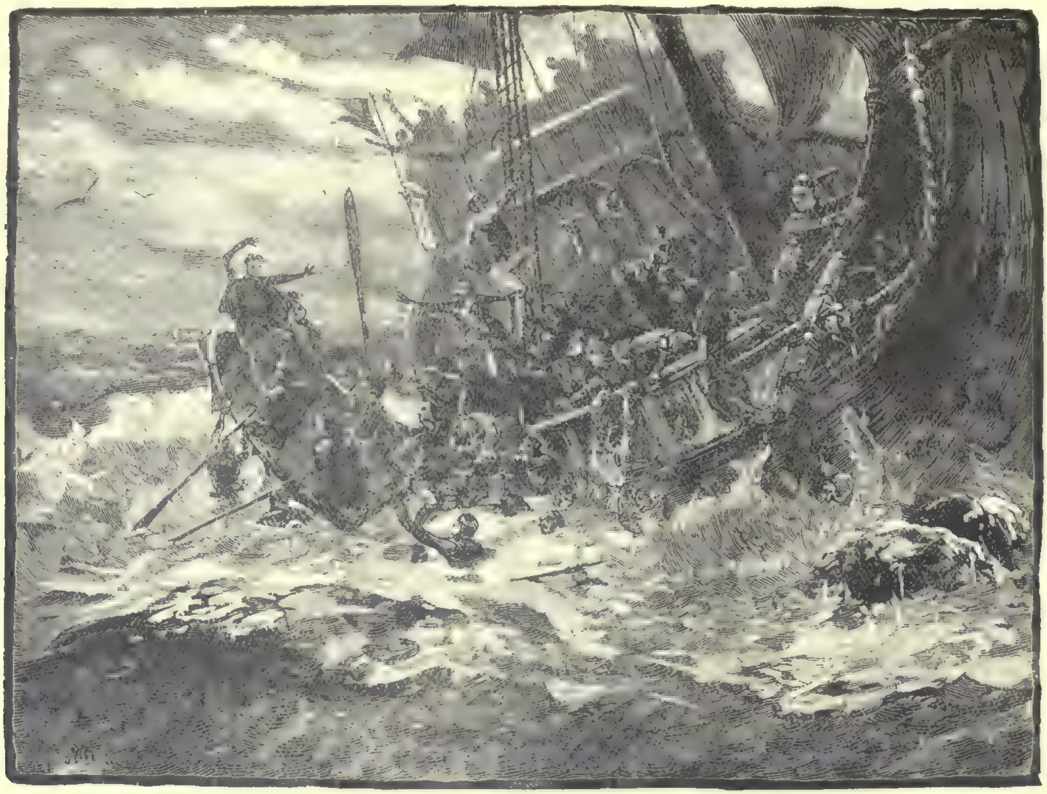
* *The White Ship.*

The news reached England on the following day, but no man dared tell the king of his bereavement. At length the courtiers tutored the young son of Count Theobald of Blois, who was sent in to the king, and, falling at his feet, told him of the loss of the *Blanche Nef*, with all on board. Henry is said to have fainted at the news, and the historians agree in dwelling upon the grief he felt—a grief so rooted that he was never afterwards seen to smile.

The English people appear to have regarded the shipwreck as a judgment of Heaven upon the vices of the prince and the cruelties of his father. This view was strengthened by the circumstance that the disaster took place, not in a storm, but on a calm sea and under a tranquil sky. The character of Prince William is represented by the chroniclers as that of a tyrannical and licentious youth. He is said to have detested the people from whom his own mother was descended, and to have declared that when he became king he would bend the necks of the English to the plough, and treat them like beasts of burden. "The proud youth!" says Henry of Huntingdon, a contemporary writer; "he was anticipating his future reign; but God said, 'Not so, thou impious one; it shall not be.' And thus it happened that his brow, instead of being encircled with a crown of gold, was dashed against the rocks of the ocean." It is possible, however, that the historians gave too much importance to the light words of a heedless youth, and we may well be cautious in covering with infamy the name of one of whose life the last and best authenticated act at least was noble and generous.



SHIPWRECK OF PRINCE WILLIAM. (*See p.* 163.)

On the death of Prince William, the Count of Anjou sent messengers to Henry, demanding back his daughter Matilda, together with the dowry which had been given to the king on her marriage. Henry willingly consented to the return of the princess to her father, but refused to give up any part of the money. Fulk was thus furnished with a pretext for renewing his former connection with William of Normandy, on whose future prospects the death of his cousin might exercise considerable influence. The son of Duke Robert was placed by Fulk in possession of the earldom of Le Mans, and was again betrothed to Sibylla, the younger daughter of the Count Henry, who was apprised of these proceedings, passed over into Normandy, and after a year of desultory warfare, made prisoners of several of the Norman barons, and detached Fulk of Anjou once more from the cause of William.

HENRY I.

In 1126 Henry's daughter Matilda became a widow, by the death of her husband, Henry V. of Germany, and the king then determined to appoint her his successor to the throne of England and the dukedom of Normandy. The native English, as well as the Normans, were altogether opposed to a scheme whose object was to place them under the government of a woman. The power of Henry was, however, so firmly established that the barons who murmured in secret did not dare openly to resist his will. Those among them who had the greatest influence were conciliated by grants of land; the assistance of the clergy was already secured; and on Christmas Day, 1126, a general assembly of the nobles and higher ecclesiastics of the kingdom was convened at Windsor Castle for the purpose of declaring the Empress Matilda (as she was still called) the legitimate successor to the throne. The clergy and the Norman barons of both countries unanimously swore allegiance to her, in the event of the king's death. Several disputes as to precedence took place on the occasion, and one of these was remarkable as having an importance beyond the mere question of court etiquette. Robert, Earl of Gloucester, who was an illegitimate son of the king, demanded to take the oath before Stephen, Count of Blois, who was the son of Adela, daughter of the Conqueror, and therefore nephew to Henry. It is probable that both of these men aspired to the throne, and that, while in the act of taking vows which they had no intention of performing, each was anxious to have his rank and standing determined. The legitimate birth of Stephen prevailed over the nearer relationship of Robert, and the Count of Boulogne first took the oaths to maintain the succession of Matilda.

In the same year (1126) Fulk, Count of Anjou, departed for the Holy Land, having first placed the government of his country in the hands of his son Geoffrey, surnamed Plante Genest, or Plantagenet, from his custom of wearing on his helmet a sprig of yellow broom instead of a feather. The young Count of Anjou is described as possessing elegant and courtly manners, a noble person, and a reputation for gallantry in the field. These qualities recommended him to the favour of King Henry, who personally invested him with the order of knighthood. The ceremony took place at Rouen with great pomp, and the king, according to the custom of chivalry, presented his son-in-arms with a horse and a splendid suit of armour.

The English king had frequently had cause to dread the opposition of the House of Anjou, and therefore he was induced, not less by motives of policy than by his regard for Geoffrey, to form an alliance with that powerful family. He determined that his daughter Matilda should wed the Count of Anjou. The marriage was concluded without the knowledge of the barons, who afterwards declared their disapproval of it, and many of them made it a pretext for breaking the oath of allegiance which they had taken to the ex-empress.

The marriage was celebrated in Rouen on August 26, 1127, and the festival, which was marked with all the splendour which the wealth of Henry could command, was prolonged during three weeks. On the first day heralds went about the streets, commanding in the king's name that all men whatsoever should take part in the festivities, and that any man neglecting to make merry on the joyful occasion should be considered guilty of an offence against the king.

Meanwhile, William of Normandy had obtained a position of power and influence which gave Henry much uneasiness. When Fulk of Anjou abandoned his connection with the son of Robert, the cause of the latter was still upheld by Louis, King of France. Charles the Good, Count of Flanders, the successor of Baldwin, was murdered by his own people while attending a service of the church in Bruges, and Louis gave that county to William. The Flemings, who at first received their new earl without opposition, broke out into revolt after the departure of the French king, and sent to ask the support of Henry. William, however, was not without supporters, and his personal gallantry, joined to high military talents, gave him the victory over the insurgents in various encounters. His career, however, was destined to be short; in an engagement under the walls of Alost, in which he completely defeated his opponents, the son of Robert received a wound on the head, which proved fatal within a few days afterwards. He died on the 27th of July, 1128, at the age of twenty-six.

Henry was thus relieved from any dread of the pretensions of his nephew, and he passed over into Normandy. In 1133 Matilda gave birth to a son, who was named Henry, and who afterwards reigned in England with the title of Henry II. Subsequently two other sons, named Geoffrey and William, were the fruit of this marriage. On the birth of his grandson, the king again endeavoured to secure to his race the succession to the throne by causing the barons once more to swear fealty to Matilda and to her children. During Henry's stay in Normandy, various quarrels took place between the ex-empress and her husband, and the king had great difficulty in keeping the peace between them. It would appear that Matilda seized every opportunity of prejudicing her father against her husband, who was exasperated at the king's refusal to place him in immediate possession of Normandy.

The last years of Henry's life were embittered by these dissensions in his family, and his health rapidly declined. In the year 1135 he received news of an incursion of the Welsh, and while preparations were making for his return to England he was seized with a sudden illness. Having passed a day in hunting at Lions-la-Forêt, in Normandy, he supped late in the evening upon a dish of lampreys, of which he was remarkably fond. An indigestion, which resulted in a fever, was the consequence of this indulgence, and three days afterwards he expired (December 1, 1135). His body was afterwards conveyed to Reading Abbey, which he had himself founded, and was there buried.

In spite of the misery endured by the English during this reign, their condition was better than it would have been had a weak king been at the head of affairs. As far as in him lay, Henry maintained order throughout the kingdom. He could do but little to ameliorate the evils of famine, pestilence, and floods; but he could, and did, check the exactions and cruelties of the barons, whether lay or ecclesiastical; he put a stop to the excessive contributions in kind levied by the followers of the court under the name of *purveyance.* Although the people suffered fearfully from taxation, they were better off than if they had been subject to the extortions of every petty landowner. The issuers of false coin were hanged without mercy, and all crimes of violence were punished with equal severity. "He made peace," says the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, "for man and beast. Whoso bare his burden of gold and silver, no man durst do him aught but good."

In order to carry out the maintenance of order, Henry strengthened the administrative machinery throughout the kingdoms. The best features in the old English system had been the local assemblies, which were remarkably representative, and did their work efficiently. These institutions, which had been allowed to lapse into decay, Henry restored in their integrity, and renewed at the same time the system of *Frank-pledge*, or mutual responsibility. But he was not content with mere restoration; it was necessary that the local courts should keep in touch with a powerful central authority, otherwise they would undoubtedly be too weak to withstand the courts of the landowning nobility. He therefore organised his ordinary council into a great court, which became known as the *Curia Regis*, or king's court. It was composed of a selection of barons, the chief officers of the royal household, and those who were best qualified for judicial matters. Its president was the *Justiciar*, who was the king's representative. The business of the court was twofold—financial and judicial. When employed in financial business the court sat in the exchequer chamber—so called because its table was covered with a cloth resembling a chess-board—and was spoken of as the court of the barons of the exchequer. The organisation of this court was the great work of Roger of Salisbury. From it proceeded men who were sent to traverse the country, first in the capacity of officers of finance, afterwards as officers of justice. These judicial visitations were developed by Henry II. into a permanent part of the system of the country.

CHAPTER XVI.

REIGN OF KING STEPHEN.

Stephen of Blois—Arrival in England—His Coronation—Pope Innocent's Letter—Claims of Matilda—The Earl of Gloucester's Policy—Revolt of the Barons—The King of Scotland Invades England—The Battle of Northallerton—Outrage on the Bishops of Salisbury, Lincoln, and Ely—The Synod of Winchester—Landing of the Empress Matilda—Outbreak of Civil War—Battle at Lincoln—Defeat and Capture of Stephen—Matilda's Arrogant Behaviour—Rising of the Londoners and Flight of Matilda—London Re-occupied by the King's Adherents—Matilda Besieged in Winchester—Exchange of the Earl of Gloucester for the King—Stephen Resumes the Crown—Reign of Terror—Siege of Oxford—Flight of Matilda—Desultory Warfare—Death of the Earl of Gloucester—Stephen's Quarrel with the Church—The Interdict Removed—Further Dangers from Normandy—Divorce of Eleanor—Her Marriage with Prince Henry—Landing of Henry in England—Unpopularity of the War—Violence and Death of Eustace—Treaty Arranged between Henry and the King—Death of Stephen.

THE exertions made by Henry to preserve to his daughter the succession to the throne proved altogether fruitless, and those solemn vows which he had exacted from the barons, and with which he had endeavoured to fence about the cause of Matilda, were of no avail. No sooner did the news of the king's death reach Stephen of Blois than he instantly took measures for seizing upon the English crown. Allusion has already been made to this ambitious noble, who, on taking the oaths of fealty to Matilda, had caused himself to be recognised as the first prince of the blood.

Stephen, Count of Blois, to whom William the Conqueror gave his daughter Adela in marriage, had several sons. Two of these, Henry and Stephen, had been invited to England by the late king, who had bestowed great favour and preferment upon them. Henry, cruel towards his enemies, was a firm and generous friend to those who happened to obtain his goodwill. Young Henry, who had been educated for the Church, was made Abbot of Glastonbury, and subsequently appointed to the see of Winchester. Stephen received the hand of Maud, daughter and heiress of Eustace, the Count of Boulogne. The connection was in the highest degree advantageous to Stephen. Immense estates in England, as well as the earldom of Boulogne, came to him in right of his wife, who moreover possessed a hold upon the sympathies of the English in consequence of her descent. Mary, his wife's mother, was the sister of David, King of Scotland, and of Matilda the Good, first wife of Henry I. and mother of the empress.

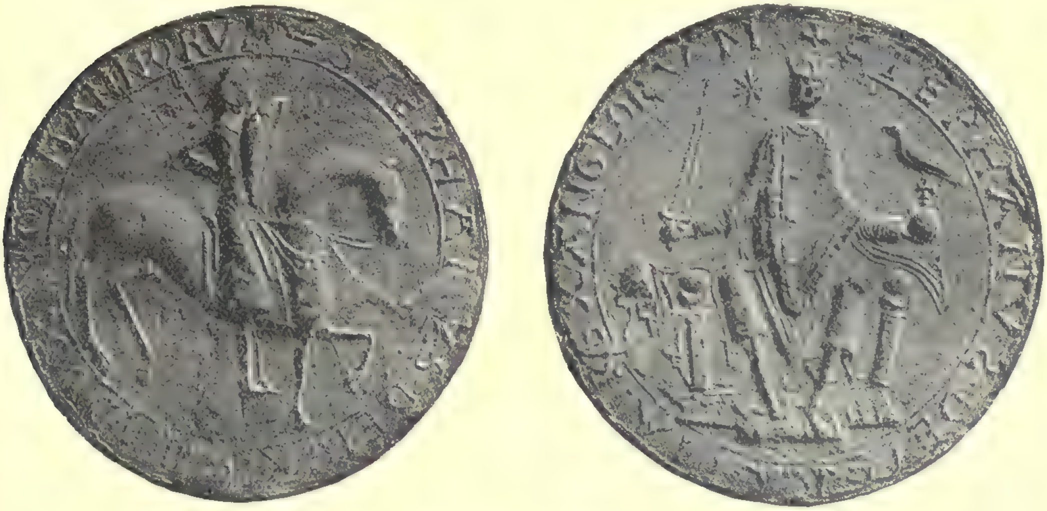
At the time of the dispute with Robert of Gloucester on the subject of precedence, Stephen professed that his gratitude to the king impelled him to be the first to offer allegiance to Matilda; but his whole course of action at this period shows that his designs upon the English crown were fully matured. He exerted himself to attain popularity among the people, as well as among the barons. His daring and gallantry secured him the admiration of the Normans, while his affable and familiar manners, joined to a generosity without stint, obtained the affections of the people.

On the death of Henry, Stephen landed in England before the news could reach Matilda; and though the gates of Dover and Canterbury were shut against him, he passed on without hesitation to London, where a majority of the people saluted him king with acclamations. By the assistance of his brother, the Bishop of Winchester, Stephen obtained possession of the royal treasure in that city, amounting to £100,000 in money, besides considerable stores of plate and jewels. The next step was to secure the goodwill and co-operation of the clergy; and in this respect his brother, the bishop, again rendered aid. Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, chief functionary of the kingdom, was secured by bribes and promises, and these two

STEPHEN.

ecclesiastics endeavoured to prevail upon William, Archbishop of Canterbury, to administer the royal unction to the usurper. The primate, who was a conscientious man, refused consent, and a dishonourable expedient was then resorted to to overcome his opposition. Hugh Bigod, steward of the royal household, presented himself before the archbishop, and swore that King Henry, on his deathbed, had disinherited his daughter Matilda, who had offended him, and that he had appointed his nephew Stephen to succeed him as the inheritor of his kingdom.

These oaths—common in the Middle Ages, and of little real security when opposed to personal interests—were nevertheless regarded nominally as of considerable weight; and a pretext, therefore, was necessary for absolving the clergy and the barons from their vows of allegiance to Matilda. This was supplied by Roger of Salisbury, who declared that those vows were null and void, because the empress had been married out of the country without the consent of the lords, who had expressly stipulated that their opinion should be consulted in the disposal of the hand of their future queen.



GREAT SEAL OF STEPHEN.

The several obstacles being thus overcome or set aside, the Archbishop of Canterbury crowned Stephen (December 26, 1135) at Westminster. Very few nobles attended the ceremony, but there was no show of opposition. The first act of the new king was to proceed to Reading to attend the burial of his uncle, and from thence he passed on to Oxford, where he held court, and summoned thither a council of the prelates and clergy of the kingdom, whom he required to swear allegiance to him. He permitted the clergy to annex to their oaths an important condition, to the effect that they swore to support his government only so long as he should maintain the rights and liberties of the Church. The barons also obtained the right of fortifying castles upon their estates.

These concessions to the Church secured the favour of the Pope, Innocent II., who soon afterwards sent letters to Stephen, confirming his title to the throne. The words of the Pontiff were as follows :—" We have heard that thou hast been chosen by the common voice and will of the people and of the lords, and that thou hast received a blessing from the ministers of the Church. Considering that the choice of so large a number of men must have been directed by Divine grace, and that, moreover, thou art closely related to the deceased king, we are well pleased with the course taken in thy behalf; and we receive thee with paternal affection as a son of the blessed Apostle Peter, and of the holy Roman Church."

Still further to secure his position, Stephen passed a charter closely resembling that issued under similar circumstances by his predecessor. He endeavoured to conciliate all the estates of the realm: to the clergy he promised that vacant benefices should immediately be filled up, and that their revenues should in no case be applied to the purposes of the crown; to the nobility he pledged his word that the royal forests, which Henry had appropriated to himself, should be restored to their ancient boundaries; and to the people he engaged to remit the tax of Danegeld, and to restore the laws of King Edward. Stephen also made lavish gifts of money and lands to those about him, and during the first year of his reign the land rejoiced once more in plenty and prosperity.

Matilda and her husband Geoffrey experienced no better fortune in Normandy than in England. The Norman nobility were influenced by the same reasons as formerly, in desiring a continuance of their union with the crown of England; while, at the same time, an hereditary animosity existed between them and the people of Anjou. When Geoffrey Plantagenet entered Normandy for the purpose of enforcing the rights of his wife Matilda, the Normans applied for assistance to Theobald of Blois, eldest brother of Stephen (1136). As soon as Stephen obtained possession of the English throne, they transferred their allegiance to him, and put him in possession of the government of the duchy. The homage which, as feudal sovereign, was due to Louis VII., King of France, he accepted from Eustace, Stephen's eldest son, instead of from the English king himself; and Louis also betrothed his sister Constantia to the young prince. The Count of Blois consented to resign his claim for a yearly pension of 2,000 marks, and Geoffrey of Anjou was compelled to conclude a truce of two years with Stephen, receiving also a pension of 5,000 marks.

Robert of Gloucester, the natural son of Henry, entertained the strongest feelings of hostility to Stephen. He appears, however, to have directed his efforts against the usurper rather in support of the claims of his sister Matilda, than of any pretensions of his own. On the elevation of Stephen to the throne, Robert found it necessary to take the oath of allegiance, since a refusal to do so would have resulted in the loss of his estates in England, and of that power which he proposed to use in his sister's behalf. He therefore offered to do homage on condition that the king fulfilled all his promises, and never invaded any of the rights of Robert. Thus a pretext was afforded for revolt at any moment, and the Earl of Gloucester, who was a man of considerable abilities and military reputation, occupied himself in promoting a spirit of disaffection among the nobles. The right which the English barons had obtained of erecting fortified castles was exercised to the utmost. Strong fortresses rapidly arose in all parts of the kingdom, and were garrisoned with licentious soldiery, native and foreign.

In proportion as the privileges of the nobles were extended, the condition of the people became once more one of oppression and misery. Petty wars broke out among the rival barons, who made incursions into each others' territories, and practised unbounded rapine on the towns and villages. Some of the more powerful chiefs declared that the promises made to them by Stephen on his accession had not been fulfilled; and they seized various parts of the royal estates, which they asserted were their due. Among these was Hugh Bigod, whose act of perjury had secured the coronation of Stephen, and who now revolted openly against the king, and took possession of Norwich Castle.

The insurgents had not yet learned to act in concert, and Stephen soon recovered the estates which had been seized. The spirit of sedition, however, was not repressed; new disturbances were continually taking place, and the country remained in a state of anarchy.

In the year 1137, Robert, Earl of Gloucester, having organised an extensive confederacy, quitted his estates, and having crossed the Channel, sent to the king a formal letter of defiance. Other great barons also, on the ground that the promises made to them had not been fulfilled, renounced their homage, and retired to their strongholds. A desultory warfare took place between the king and his disaffected nobles.

In March, 1138, David, King of Scotland, crossed the Tweed at the head of an army which he had collected from every part of his kingdom, to defend the title of his niece, Matilda. The chroniclers describe the Scottish army as a barbarous multitude, many of whom, gathered from the recesses of the Highlands, were fierce and untutored, half clad, and with only the rudest weapons of war. This undisciplined host passed through Northumberland into Yorkshire, devastating the country, and committing unheard of barbarities upon the miserable inhabitants. It is related of them that they behaved after the manner of wild beasts, slaying all who came in their way, sparing neither old age in its helplessness, nor beauty in its spring, nor the infant in the womb.

The fury of these massacres exasperated the northern nobility, who might otherwise have been disposed to join the King of Scotland. Thurstan, Archbishop of York, an aged man, seemed to derive new youth from the crisis which demanded the exertion of his energies. He shook off the weight of years and, organising an army, he earnestly exhorted the barons and the soldiers to defend their countrymen from the ravages of the invaders. William, Earl of Albemarle, Roger Mowbray, Robert de Ferrers, William Piercy, Walter L'Espec, and others of their compeers, assembled their troops, and encamped at Elfer-tun, now called Northallerton, about half-way between York and Durham, and there awaited the arrival of the enemy. The advance of the Scots had been so rapid that Stephen, who was occupied with repressing the rebellion in the south, had no time to reach the scene of action.

The Scottish army, the first division of which was led by Prince Henry, son of David, crossed the Tees in several divisions, bearing as a standard a lance, to which was fixed a bunch of "blooming heather." They did not form, as was the case with more disciplined armies, distinct bodies of horse and foot, but each man brought to the field of battle such arms as he could obtain. With the exception of the French or Norman knights, whom the King of Scotland brought with him, and who were armed *cap-à-pie* with complete suits of mail, the mass of his soldiers displayed a disorderly equipment. The men of Galloway and other parts of the west wore no defensive armour, and bore long sharp pikes or javelins as their only weapon. The inhabitants of the lowlands, who formed the chief part of the infantry, were armed with spears and breastplates; while the Highlanders, who wore a bonnet adorned with plumes, and a plaid cloak fastened at the waist by a leathern belt, appeared in the fight with a small wooden shield on the left arm, while in the right hand they bore the claymore or broadsword. The chiefs wore the same armour as their soldiers, from whom they were distinguished only by the length of their plumes.

The Anglo-Norman barons, anxious to invoke on their behalf the ancient superstitions of the English, caused the banners of St. Peter of York, St. John of Beverley, and St. Wilfrid of Ripon, to be brought from the churches in which they had remained since the time of the Conqueror, and erected them in the midst of the camp. The mast of a ship was set up in a car with four wheels; at the top of the mast was fixed a crucifix, attached to which was a silver box, containing the sacramental wafer, or eucharist, and round it were hung the banners of the three English saints.

This standard, from which the battle has taken its name, was erected in the centre of the position. The knights of the English army were ranged beside it, having first sworn to remain united, and to defend the sacred symbol to the death. The Archbishop of York, who was prevented by illness from appearing in the field, sent a representative in the person of Ranulph, Bishop of Durham, who, as the Scots were heard approaching, placed himself at the foot of the standard and read the prayer of absolution, the whole army kneeling before him. The attack was made by the men of Galloway, who rushed impetuously on the English infantry and broke their ranks; the cavalry, however, remained firm round their standard, and repulsed the charges of the Scots with great slaughter. Meanwhile the bowmen of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire rallied from their confusion, and poured in flights of arrows upon the enemy, while the Norman knights, protected by their heavy armour, were receiving the attacks of the brave but undisciplined natives of the north. The Scots maintained the contest for two hours, but at length they were thrown into confusion by a charge of the Norman cavalry, and were compelled to retreat as far as the Tyne. At the battle of Northallerton, which was fought on the 22nd of August, 1138, the loss of the Scots is stated to have been 12,000 men.

Three days after this defeat, the King of Scotland arrived at Carlisle, where he rallied his scattered forces, and subsequently laid siege to Wark Castle, which fell into his hands. Notwithstanding the result of the Battle of the Standard, the counties of Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Northumberland remained for many years free from Norman dominion, and attached to the kingdom of Scotland.

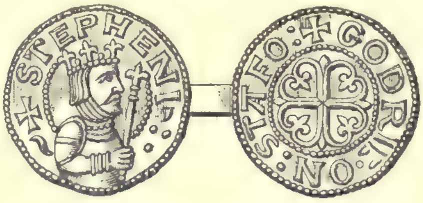
Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, the story of whose elevation to the favour of Henry I. has been already related, was at this time possessed of vast wealth and influence in the kingdom. He was a munificent patron of the arts, and expended large sums in the erection of magnificent churches and other public works. Architects, artists, and men of letters were secure of his favour, and the wealth, which was often obtained by not the most honest means, was at least bestowed in a manner beneficial to the age in which he lived. Roger had rendered good service to Stephen at the time of his accession to the throne, and the king had rewarded him with repeated and valuable gifts. It would appear, however, that these possessions were heaped upon the bishop, less for his own use than with the view of being available for the royal purposes whenever the king might choose to seize upon them.

The nobles of the court had not witnessed without envy the increasing power and magnificence of the Bishop of Salisbury; and at the time when Stephen was menaced by an invasion from the Continent they circulated a report that the bishop was in league with the conspirators. The king, who wanted money, was glad of a pretext for seizing the possessions of Roger, and ordered him to be arrested, together with his two nephews, Alexander, Bishop of Lincoln, and Nigel, Bishop of Ely. Nigel made his escape, and took refuge in the castle of Devizes, but Roger and Alexander were captured, and confined in separate dungeons. A quarrel which had previously taken place between some of the bishop's retainers and those of the Count of Brittany formed the ground of the chief accusation, which was that the bishops had violated the peace of the king within the limits of his court. Stephen demanded the surrender of all their castles as an atonement for the offence; and, after considerable opposition on the part of the two bishops, the demand was generally complied with. The Bishop of Ely, however, still refused to surrender the castle of Devizes; and Stephen commanded that Roger and the Bishop of Lincoln should receive no food until the castle was given up. By the king's order Roger appeared, wasted with fasting, before the gates of Devizes, and implored his nephew to surrender, and after a delay of three days the Bishop of Ely at length yielded, to save the lives of his relatives.

These proceedings excited the utmost indignation among the prelates and clergy of the kingdom, and Henry, Bishop of Winchester, who had been appointed legate of the Pope, cited his brother, the king, to appear before an ecclesiastical synod at Winchester to answer for his conduct. Alberic de Vere attended before the council as the substitute of Stephen, and the bishops having persisted in demanding reparation for the insult to the Church, De Vere appealed in the king's name to the Pope, and, drawing his sword, declared the assembly to be dissolved. A series of disasters, which soon after endangered the life and crown of Stephen, were, in a great measure, to be referred to this determined opposition to the clergy. The synod at Winchester was held in September 1139, and three months afterwards, Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, died at an advanced age, his end having probably been accelerated by the mortifications he had suffered.

On the 22nd of September, in the same year, the Empress Matilda landed in England, accompanied by Robert, Earl of Gloucester. The latter immediately proceeded with a small escort to the castle of Bristol, where he occupied himself in collecting his followers. Matilda joined him after a short stay in Arundel Castle.

Civil war now raged throughout the country. The Norman race in England was immediately split up into two factions, and each man looked with distrust upon his neighbour, uncertain whether to regard him as a friend or an enemy. Many of the barons of the west and north declared for Matilda, and recalled the oaths they had taken to Stephen; while many of the more rapacious lords, to whom the public good was a matter of no concern, kept aloof from both parties, and occupied themselves with seizing the property of farmers and citizens. The chronicles of the time are filled with accounts of the atrocities which were committed at this period throughout the length and breadth of the land, which was desolated in every direction by violence and rapine.



SILVER PENNY OF STEPHEN.

Stephen having failed in an attempt to take the town of Bristol, which was strongly fortified, turned his forces to the east, where a formidable insurrection had broken out, headed by the Bishop of Ely. On the very spot where Hereward, the Saxon, had erected his fort of wood, a camp was formed by the Norman adherents of Matilda, who entrenched themselves behind ramparts of stone and wood. Stephen conducted his attack in the same manner as had been done by William the Conqueror. He built bridges of boats, by which his soldiers passed over, and put to flight the troops of Nigel.

The bishop fled to Gloucester, where Matilda had assembled the greater number of her adherents. During the absence of Stephen in the east, the flames of revolt were raging throughout the west, and churches as well as castles were fortified by the insurgents for the purposes of defence. The bishops are said not to have scrupled to take part in these military operations: they were seen, as in the time of the Conqueror, mounted on chargers, and clad in suits of mail, bearing a lance or a truncheon in their hands, directing the attacks of the soldiers, and drawing lots for a share of the booty.

In 1141 Stephen displayed the utmost activity in marching against his enemies. After having crossed and recrossed the country, he appeared before the castle of Lincoln, which was in the hands of the adherents of Matilda. The townspeople, however, favoured the king's cause, and, in opposition to the garrison, assisted him to lay siege to the fortress. Meanwhile the Earl of Gloucester had collected an army of 10,000 men, and in the hope of effecting a surprise, marched rapidly to Lincoln, and appeared before the besieging troops. Stephen, however, had been apprised of his coming, and having drawn up his forces in battle array, placed himself at their head. The contest was unequal; most of the royal cavalry deserted to the enemy, and many of the other troops wavered in their allegiance. In such a case defeat was inevitable. Stephen fought with valour, but after having broken his sword and battle-axe, he was made prisoner by the Earl of Gloucester.

This defeat was disastrous to the royal cause. Many of the Norman nobles and of the clergy, among whom was Henry of Winchester, the king's own brother, gave in their adhesion to the cause of Matilda. The support of the bishop is said to have been gained by a promise on the part of the empress that he should be placed in the position of her chief minister, and should have the disposal of all the vacant benefices of the Church. On the day after this bargain was concluded, the granddaughter of the Conqueror made her triumphal entry into Winchester. She was received at the gates by Bishop Henry, at the head of the clergy, who conducted her to the cathedral; and the brother of Stephen pronounced a blessing upon all who should follow her cause, and a curse on those who should oppose it.

INTERVIEW BETWEEN THE EMPRESS MATILDA AND QUEEN MAUD. (*See p.* 174.)

Having taken possession of the royal treasure which remained at Winchester, Matilda, after some delay, proceeded to London, where she arrived at midsummer. She was of English descent, and the unhappy citizens, ground down by taxation, hoped to obtain from her some release of the burdens with which they were oppressed. But Matilda's good fortune soon rendered her disdainful and arrogant; and it is said by an old historian that when those men to whom she owed her elevation bowed down before her, she did not rise from her throne, and their requests were frequently met by a refusal. It is, therefore, scarcely matter for surprise that, when the citizens of London entreated her to take pity on them, she answered with a frown, and one of her first acts was to impose a heavy tax, or tallage, in addition to the burdens with which they were already afflicted. The empress seems to have possessed a malignant nature, which found vent in injuries inflicted equally on friends and enemies. Henry of Winchester, who may have felt some compunction at the part he had acted towards his brother, desired that his nephew Eustace, the son of Stephen, might be put in possession of his hereditary foreign rights. Matilda, instead of trying to make a compact, replied to the request with an insulting denial. Many other acts of arrogance, as impolitic in a queen as they were disgraceful in a woman, were exhibited towards her best friends; and when Maud, the wife of Stephen, who was Matilda's own cousin, appeared in her presence and begged that her husband might be restored to liberty, the empress drove the sorrowing wife away in tears.

Matilda was making ready for her coronation in perfect security, when a rising of the people, as sudden as it was unanimous, resulted in driving her from London in the utmost haste, and without even so much as a change of raiment. An alarm sounded from all the steeples of the city, and immediately every street was filled with an excited multitude of people. From the doors of every house men came forth, armed with such weapons as they could procure. The empress and her Angevins (that is, people of Anjou), startled by the suddenness of the attack, and not daring to risk a conflict where the numbers were so greatly against them, and which would have to be carried on in narrow streets, where every advantage would be on the side of their enemies—made no resistance, but hastily seized horses and galloped off at full speed. Matilda had scarcely quitted the town, when the enraged populace forced their way into her apartments, and seized or destroyed whatever they found there.

As the ex-empress sped on her way, the barons and knights who accompanied her one by one detached themselves from the escort, and, consulting their own safety, fled across the country or along cross-roads towards their strongholds. She arrived at Oxford with the Earl of Gloucester and a few followers, whom motives of policy, or a regard for their knightly honour, still held attached to her fortunes. The citizens of London attempted no pursuit of the fugitives. Their revolt appears to have been a sudden outbreak of popular indignation rather than the result of any preconcerted arrangement, and was not followed by any further measures of a similar kind. The Norman adherents of King Stephen soon afterwards re-entered London, and having obtained the consent of the citizens, by the promise of an alliance with them, garrisoned the city with troops. The only privileges obtained by the citizens in consequence of the insurrection were the permission of enlistment to the number of one thousand men, and of fighting in the cause of the king, wearing a helmet and hauberk. Queen Maud, the wife of Stephen, proceeded to London, and there held court. She was a woman of gentle and amiable character; but her lot was cast in evil times, and she displayed the energy and courage of a man in her efforts to obtain her husband's liberation.

The Bishop of Winchester, whom Matilda, in her short day of power, had so grievously offended, no sooner perceived the tide of fortune turning against the empress, than he deserted her cause, and once more declared himself in favour of his brother. He hoisted the banner of Stephen on the walls of Winchester Castle, and on his palace, which had been fortified with all the engineering skill of the age. Other castles within his diocese, including those of Waltham and Farnham, were strongly garrisoned. An interview took place at Guildford between the bishop and his sister-in-law, Queen Maud, whose entreaties probably removed any hesitation he might feel as to his course of action.

Matilda, having become aware of these transactions, sent the bishop a haughty message to appear immediately in her presence. The prelate sent back the messenger with the answer that he was "making himself ready for her"—an expression which had a double meaning. Matilda marched with her followers to Winchester; but the bishop, leaving his palace defended by a strong garrison, quitted the town as she entered it, and proceeded to place himself at the head of his vassals, and of the knights who had agreed to fight under his standard. The castle of Winchester was given up to Matilda, and she summoned around her those barons who still adhered to her cause. Among these were Robert of Gloucester, the Earl of

Chester, the Earl of Hereford, and David, King of Scotland, uncle to the empress.

The troops under these leaders laid siege to the episcopal palace, which stood in the heart of the city. The bishop's garrison having set fire to the adjoining houses, which might have served as places of defence to the assailants, retired into their fortress, and waited for succour. Meanwhile the Bishop of Winchester had received an accession of strength from the troops of Queen Maud, among whom were the citizens of London, to the number, as already mentioned, of one thousand. Marching rapidly to Winchester, the bishop surprised the troops of the empress, who were compelled to entrench themselves in the churches, while Matilda herself, with her chief nobles, took refuge in the castle. Thus besiegers were in turn besieged; the sanctuary was not respected by the warlike Bishop of Winchester, and the churches were burnt down in order to force the occupants from their places of refuge. The unhappy inhabitants suffered extreme misery while this murderous warfare was going on in their streets; they were plundered by both of the opposing factions, their goods seized without redress, and their homes burnt down or ransacked.

The castle, which was completely surrounded by the troops of the bishop, sustained a siege of six weeks, by which time the provisions of the garrison were exhausted. A daring expedient was determined upon by the empress as the alternative of an unconditional surrender. The 14th of September, 1141, was the feast of the Holy Rood or Cross, on which, as on other festivals of the church, it was the custom for antagonists in the field to desist from hostilities. At daybreak on that day, when the besieging troops were asleep or engaged in preparing for their devotions, Matilda stole out from the castle, accompanied by her brother, the Earl of Gloucester, and a small but chosen escort. Mounted on fleet horses they made their way through the troops of the bishop, and fled at full speed along the road to Devizes. A hot pursuit was immediately set on foot, and the fugitives were overtaken in the neighbourhood of Stourbridge. Finding escape impossible, the Earl of Gloucester and the knights who were with him turned upon their pursuers and kept them at bay, while the empress urged on her horse and arrived in safety at Devizes. After a gallant resistance the earl and several of his companions were taken prisoners.

About a month after the capture of the Earl of Gloucester, a treaty was concluded between the belligerents, by the terms of which the king was exchanged for the earl, and thus the leaders of both armies regained their liberty. Stephen resumed his title and the exercise of the royal authority over the eastern and midland counties, which were the parts of the country in the possession of his adherents. Normandy no longer acknowledged the rule of the English king. During his imprisonment the duchy had submitted to Geoffrey of Anjou, who soon afterwards resigned it in favour of his eldest son Henry.

During this time the country wore an aspect of woe and desolation. All kinds of depredations were committed by the soldiers of Brabant, the Flemings, and other foreigners, with whom the land was overrun; while the Anglo-Norman nobles raised funds for the expenses of the civil war by selling their English estates together with the miserable inhabitants. So great was the terror excited among the people by this state of things, that we are told that a considerable body of them would take to flight at the sight of three or four horsemen. Stories dark and dread were currently reported of cruelties practised by the Normans upon those who fell into their power. Those prisoners who were suspected to possess property of any kind were subjected to unheard of tortures to compel them to give up their hoards. Some were suspended by the feet, while fumes of smoke were made to ascend about their heads; others were tied at some distance from the ground by the thumbs, while their feet were scorched by fire; or were thrown into pits filled with reptiles of different kinds; sometimes they suffered the dislocation of their limbs in what was called the *chambre à crucir*:* this was a chest lined with sharp-pointed stones, in which the victim was fastened up.† Many of the castles contained a room or dungeon specially set apart for these purposes, and filled with instruments of torture, and with iron chains so heavy that it required two or three men to lift them. "You might have journeyed," says the authority already quoted, "a whole day without seeing a living person in the towns, or in the country one field in a state of tillage. The poor perished with hunger, and many who once possessed property now begged food from door to door. Every man who had the power quitted England. Never were greater sorrows poured upon this land."

Alarmed at the increasing power of Stephen, Matilda sent the Earl of Gloucester to her husband, Geoffrey of Anjou, entreating him to bring his forces to her aid. The earl replied that his presence was necessary in his own dominions, but expressed his willingness to send his son, Prince Henry, in his stead. Some months' delay ensued, and then Henry, with the earl, his uncle, quitted Normandy with an inconsiderable force, and effected a landing in England.

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* Torture-chamber.

† Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

Meanwhile, Stephen, having recovered from his illness, collected an army and laid siege to the city of Oxford, where Matilda had assembled her followers (1142). The town fell into his hands almost immediately, and was set on fire by the royal troops. The empress had retreated into the castle, which was a place of great strength; but it proved to be insufficiently victualled. The fortress was surrounded and cut off from all supplies from without, and after a siege of three months the empress found herself compelled to make her escape in the same manner as before.

One night in December, when the ground was covered with snow, Matilda quitted the castle at midnight, attended by four knights, who, as well as herself, were clothed in white. The party passed through the lines of their enemies entirely unobserved, and crossed the Thames, which was frozen over. The adventurous daughter of Henry I. then pursued her way, sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback, to Wallingford, where she joined the army of her son and the Earl of Gloucester.

After having taken Oxford Castle, Stephen encountered the forces of the Earl of Gloucester at Wilton, and was defeated, the king himself having a narrow escape of a second imprisonment. A desultory warfare ensued, which lasted during three years, without any important advantage to either side. Prince Henry remained during this time at Bristol Castle, in the company of his uncle, the Earl of Gloucester, and in 1147 returned to Normandy. Soon after his departure, Robert of Gloucester died of an illness resulting from alternate excesses and privations. Deprived of the aid of her half-brother, who had governed her affairs with undoubted ability, Matilda found her position become every day less secure. One by one her most faithful partisans fell away, stricken down by disease, or weary of the contest; and among

FLIGHT OF MATILDA FROM OXFORD CASTLE. (*See p.* 176.)

From the Picture by Sir John Gilbert, R.A., P R W S.

THE BATTLE OF THE STANDARD, A.D. 1138.

BY PERMISSION FROM THE PAINTING IN THE CORPORATION ART GALLERY OF THE CITY OF LONDON.

those who died was the Earl of Hereford, one of the ablest and most powerful defenders of her cause. At length the ex-empress determined to pass over into Normandy, there to concert with her husband and her son fresh measures for renewing the struggle. Emboldened by her absence, Stephen made vigorous attempts to re-establish his power upon a firm basis; and for this purpose he endeavoured by stratagem, as well as by force, to obtain possession of various strongholds which had been seized and fortified by the barons. The efforts thus made to reduce these haughty chiefs to submission met with little success, and the king's own adherents were ill-disposed to support a policy which they foresaw might one day be extended to themselves.

GREAT SEAL OF HENRY II.

On the death of Innocent II. (September 24, 1144), the office of Legate of the Holy See was transferred from the Bishop of Winchester to Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury. The archbishop, having proceeded to the Council of Rheims in opposition to the royal command, was banished from the court.

This impolitic act of Stephen was attended by consequences which show the extraordinary power possessed by the clergy over the rude and licentious men of that age. Hugh Bigod, the Earl of Norfolk, one of the adherents of Matilda, received the exiled prelate under his protection; and Theobald issued a sentence of excommunication against all the followers of the king, and the royal domain was declared without the pale of the Church.

While it is probable that the interdict of the Archbishop of Canterbury did not interfere materially with the offices of charity and mercy which, in addition to those of religion, were performed by the monks, it is, nevertheless, easy to understand why such a proclamation might be attended with serious inconvenience even to that part of the laity which cared nothing for the services of religion. The discontent throughout the country became so loud that Stephen was compelled to make overtures to the archbishop for a reconciliation. After some delay, the primate accepted the terms, and the ban of the church was removed from the royal domains. The king, who in the interval had learnt the expediency of securing the favour and adhesion of the clergy, made large donations to the churches and monasteries, and promised to extend these gifts, and add to them certain important privileges as soon as the kingdom should be placed in a condition of peace and security.

Two years after the reconciliation with the archbishop, Stephen convened at London a general assembly of the higher ecclesiastics, and demanded that his eldest son, Eustace, should with their authority be acknowledged as successor to the throne. The bishops, headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, refused positively to comply with this demand. As the legate of Rome, the archbishop had communicated with the Pope on the subject, and had received for answer that Stephen was a usurper, and had not the right possessed by legitimate sovereigns of transmitting the crown to a successor, Exasperated by a refusal which followed his efforts at conciliation, Stephen ordered the bishops to be placed under arrest, and their benefices to be seized. This, however, was only a temporary outburst of anger, and appears to have been to some extent justified by the open defiance given by the prelates to the sovereign to whom they had sworn allegiance.

The king soon found himself menaced by further dangers from Normandy. In 1149, Prince Henry, the son of Matilda, had landed in Scotland attended by a retinue of knights and nobles, for the purpose of receiving the order of knighthood from his relative the King of Scotland. David, at that time, held his court at Carlisle; and Henry, who had just attained his sixteenth year, received his spurs at that place in the presence of a vast assemblage of barons from various parts of England, as well as from Scotland and Normandy. The gallant bearing and character of the young prince produced the most favourable effect upon those who witnessed the ceremony, and was afterwards contrasted with that of the son of Stephen, to the disadvantage of the latter. Henry, having returned to Normandy in the year 1150, was placed in possession of the government of that duchy, and on the death of his father, Geoffrey Plantagenet, which took place immediately afterwards, the prince received the earldom of Anjou. This province was said to be conferred upon him with the stipulation that he should resign it in favour of his younger brother on the day when he should become king; but the legality of the will was doubtful.

In 1152 Henry married Eleanor, the divorced wife of Louis VII. of France and daughter of William, Duke of Aquitaine and Count of Poitou. According to the laws of these provinces, Eleanor succeeded her father in the exercise of sovereignty, and her husband, though a foreigner, shared the same rights. Eleanor was married, in 1137, to Louis, King of France, who exercised control over her domains so long as he remained united to her, and he garrisoned the towns of Aquitaine with soldiers and officers of his own. The queen had given birth to two daughters, and the union had lasted several years without interruption, when Louis determined to make a pilgrimage to Palestine, and his wife, whose uncle Raymond was Duke of Antioch, accompanied him on the journey. In the account already given of the First Crusade, allusion has been made to the low state of morality which prevailed in the camps, and it would appear that even the Queen of France was not exempt from the evil influences by which she was surrounded. Eleanor, who was possessed of remarkable beauty, displayed great freedom of manners, and she was accused, justly or otherwise, of an improper connection with a young Saracen knight, named Saladin. On the return of the court from the Holy Land, in the year 1152, Louis called a council of the clergy at Beaugency-sur-Loire, and demanded a divorce from his wife. The cause of the king was pleaded by the Bishop of Langres, who offered evidence of the offences committed by the queen. The Archbishop of Bordeaux, however, while assenting to the king's request, proposed that the separation should take place in a manner less fatal to the reputation of Eleanor—namely, on the ground of consanguinity between the parties. It was discovered by the prelates—rather late—that the queen was the cousin of her husband within the prohibited degrees. This, however, was the sole ground on which the laws of the Church permitted a divorce, which, under any circumstances, was only granted to princes.

Eleanor, who regarded her husband as "more a monk than a king," assented readily to a separation; and on the marriage being annulled, she set out for her own domains, and remained for a while in the town of Blois. The repudiated wife seems to have had no want of suitors, and rather found a difficulty in protecting herself from their importunities. Theobald, Count of Blois, the brother of King Stephen, offered her his hand, and having met with a refusal, he detained the duchess a prisoner in his castle, with the determination of marrying her by force. Suspecting his design, Eleanor escaped from the castle by night, descended the Loire in a boat, and reached the city of Tours, which then belonged to the duchy of Anjou.

Geoffrey of Anjou, the second son of Matilda, hearing of the arrival of the duchess, and tempted, probably, by her vast possessions, determined also to make her his wife, and placed himself in ambush at the Port de Piles on the Loire, to intercept her as she passed, and carry her off. Eleanor, however, "warned by her good angel," turned aside and took the road to Poitiers. Here Henry, with more courtesy than his brother or the Count of Blois, presented himself to her, and the offer of his hand being accepted, married her within a few weeks after her divorce (May 18). The conduct of the young prince in this transaction does not appear in a very delicate or chivalrous light; and it is evident that motives of policy alone could have induced him to marry a woman who, however beautiful, was considerably older than himself, and whose reputation was certainly not without stain.

By this alliance Henry received the titles of Duke of Aquitaine and Count of Poitou, in addition to those which he had previously possessed. His domains now nearly equalled in extent those of the French king; and Louis, alarmed at the increase of the Norman power, forbade Henry—who, as Duke of Normandy, was his vassal—to contract the marriage with Eleanor. Henry, however, paid no regard to the prohibition, and the French king was compelled to accept the new vows of homage which the prince now offered him for the territories of Aquitaine and Poitou. These oaths—which were, in fact, little else than matters of form—had been for many years the only bond which remained between the ancient Capetian kings and the lords of those provinces which extended between the Loire and the two seas.

The great and rapid increase of power thus attained by Henry Plantagenet necessarily excited the hopes of his mother, and of her adherents in England, who were gratified by the prospect of renewing the contest with Stephen in favour of a young prince whose gallantry and abilities offered the best prospect of success. The English king foresaw the approaching danger, and had no difficulty in perceiving that Henry would command many more supporters in England than would have ranged themselves under the standard of the haughty Matilda. Stephen, therefore, concluded an alliance with Louis of France, as well as with the Count of Blois, and with Geoffrey of Anjou, Henry's younger brother. The two latter willingly took up arms against one who occupied to both of them the position of a successful rival, and they joined the army which the French king marched into Normandy. Henry, however, made a vigorous defence, and having repulsed the attacks of the French with success, he obtained a truce. Meanwhile the Earl of Chester had arrived in the duchy from England, bearing with him a message from a number of chiefs of the Plantagenet party, who invited Henry to take possession of the throne in his own right. The earl declared this to be the unanimous will of the people; and the prince responded to the call, and, without waiting to organise a large force, immediately set sail for England. The army with which he landed numbered about 140 knights, and 3,000 infantry; it was composed, however, of picked men, and was well disciplined. Many of the barons of the kingdom immediately joined his standard, bringing with them considerable reinforcements; and Henry marched his forces to Wallingford for the purpose of giving battle to the king. Meanwhile Stephen had made great exertions to oppose his adversary, and endeavoured, by bribes and other means, to detach the barons from his cause. Some of the latter who had declared for Henry, no sooner heard with what a small force he had ventured into England, than they returned to the side of the king. The war between the opposing factions was carried on in the same manner as before—castles were besieged and taken, and towns carried by assault, plundered, and burnt. The English, driven from their homes, or flying from them in terror, built huts under the walls of the churches, in the hope that the sacredness of the place would protect them from outrage and plunder. No such considerations, however, restrained the belligerents, who expelled the people from their sanctuary, and turned the churches into fortresses. On the steeples, whence the sweet sounds of bells were wont to give the call to prayer, were now placed the frowning engines of war.

The army of Stephen, which had marched from London, occupied the left bank of the Thames at Wallingford, opposite to the troops of Henry. The opposing forces remained in this position during two whole days without coming to an engagement, and during the pause which thus took place negotiations were entered into between the two princes. It would appear that even the Norman nobles had become tired of the horrors of a civil war which had lasted fifteen years, and the Earl of Arundel did not hesitate to say that it was unreasonable that the calamities of the nation should be continued further through the ambition of two princes. Other lords on both sides expressed the same sentiments, and entreated the king and the prince to meet together for the purpose of arranging terms of peace.

An interview took place between the two chiefs, who conversed with each other across a narrow part of the river Thames, and ultimately agreed to desist from hostilities, pending the conclusion of a treaty which was to be arranged at a general council of the kingdom. Prince Eustace, the only son of Stephen, was seized with indignation at the prospect of an arrangement which would probably exclude him from the throne, and, instantly quitting his father's presence, he proceeded into Cambridgeshire, recklessly determining to maintain his right by arms. Having gathered together a band of lawless followers, he seized possession of the abbey of St. Edmund, ejected the monks, and placed there his headquarters. He occupied himself in plundering the neighbourhood, and the property so obtained was expended in rioting and other excesses. This state of things, however, was of short duration. One day, when the prince was seated at a banquet, he was seized with a sudden and violent illness, or frenzy, of which he died. The memory of St. Edmund, king and martyr, was held in the highest veneration by the English people, and the death of the prince was attributed by them to the vengeance of Heaven, provoked by the outrage he had committed upon the sanctuary of the saint.

Stephen now had less difficulty in agreeing to terms which would be acceptable to Henry. The king had, indeed, one son remaining, but he was too young to be aware of how much his interests were concerned in the arrangements about to be made. The council of the kingdom was held at Winchester, November 7th, 1153, and it was finally determined that Stephen should retain the throne during his life, and that after his death the succession should devolve upon Henry and his heirs. This treaty was sworn to by the clergy, nobles, and knights of both parties, and is described by different writers in different points of view. It is worthy of remark that we find the various boroughs regarded in connection with this treaty as of some importance, and that they were called upon to take the oaths of allegiance in the same manner as the barons. The officers of the most important of the royal castles gave hostages to Henry for the surrender of those strongholds to him when the king's death should take place.

The treaty having been concluded, Henry and Stephen made a progress together through the country, visiting the cities of London, Winchester, and Oxford. Everywhere they were received with unfeigned joy by the people, who, whatever might have been their sentiments with respect to either prince, welcomed the chance which placed them side by side with sheathed swords.

Henry proceeded to the Continent at the time of Lent, 1154, and in the month of October in the same year Stephen died at Dover, in the fiftieth year of his age, and the nineteenth of his reign. He was buried at the monastery of Faversham, in Kent, and his tomb was afterwards destroyed when the monasteries were suppressed by the command of Henry VIII.

CHAPTER XVII.

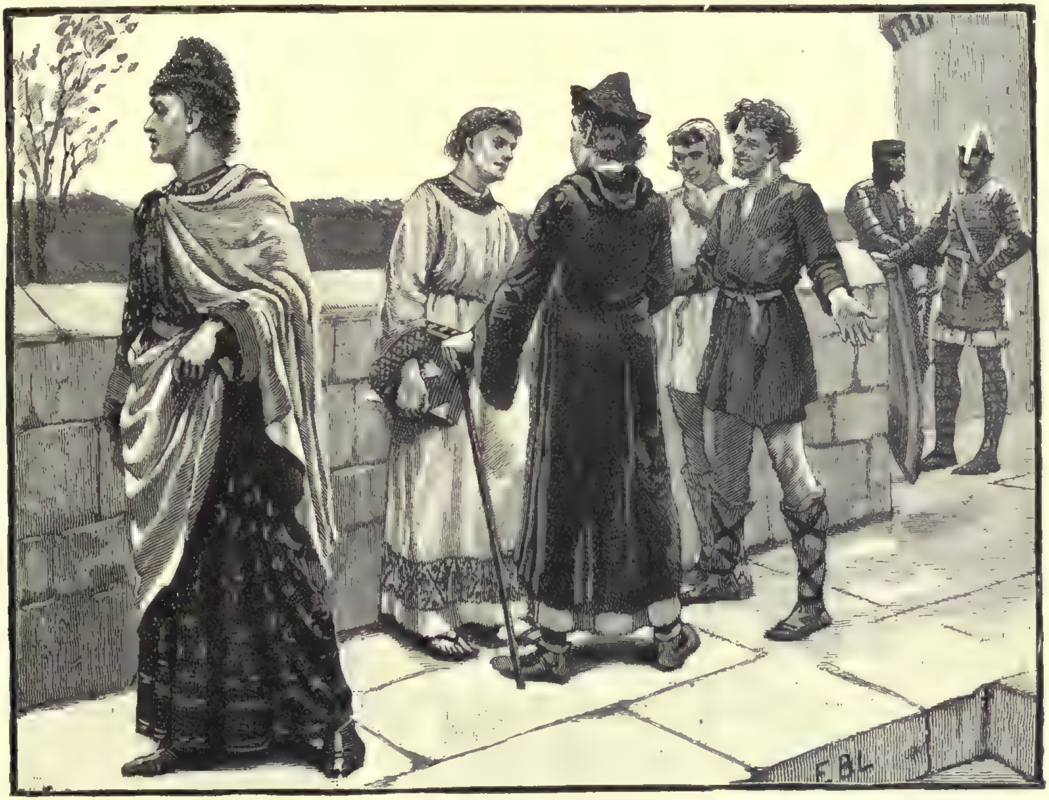
THE REIGN OF HENRY II.

Accession of Henry Plantagenet—Royal Entry into Winchester—Expulsion of the Flemings—Henry's Dealings with the Baron,—Siege of Bridgenorth Castle—The King's Quarrel with Geoffrey—Henry's Magnificence—War with, and Submission of, the Welsh—The King in Brittany—Alarm of the King of France at Henry's Schemes of Aggrandisement—Henry's Designs on Toulouse—Origin of *Scutage*—Peace with Louis—The People of Languedoc—Louis' Third Marriage—Fresh Rupture between the Two Kings—Marriage of Henry's Son and Louis' Daughter—The Two Popes—Renewed Reconciliation.

At the time of the death of Stephen, Henry was engaged in a desultory warfare against some of his rebellious vassals in Guienne. Secure in the strength of his party in England, and in the certainty that his succession would not be disputed, he remained in France to bring the affairs in which he was engaged to a successful termination, and then proceeded to take possession of the vacant throne. The news of his arrival, which took place six weeks after the death of Stephen, was received with general gratification by the people, who were induced to hope, from the lineage as well as from the character of the new king, that his rule would be just and impartial.

The English race, faithful to their old traditions, dwelt with satisfaction upon the English blood which had been transmitted to Henry by his mother, Matilda. They forgot the haughty character of the empress-queen, and remembered only that she and, through her, their new sovereign were descended from Alfred the Great. Writers of the time, who either believed sincerely what they wrote, or were paid to influence the people in favour of their monarch, affirmed that England now once more possessed a king of English race; that already there were many bishops and abbots of the same race, while of chiefs and nobles not a few had sprung from the admixture of Norman and English blood. They therefore held that the hatred hitherto existing between the two races would henceforth rapidly disappear. The opinions thus hopefully expressed were not justified by the actual circumstances, nor were they realised for a considerable time afterwards.

Henry II., however, was fully aware of the support which the Norman dynasty would receive from the intermixture of the two races. He encouraged the popular feeling with regard to his English birth, and evinced no displeasure when the English monks, in describing his genealogy, avoided all allusion to his descent on the father's side. "Thou art a son," they said, "of the most glorious Empress Matilda, whose mother was Matilda, daughter of Margaret, Queen of Scotland, whose father was Edward, son of King Edmund Ironside, who was great grandson of the noble King Alfred." Predictions also were discovered, or invented, tending to raise still further the hopes of the people in the prosperity which would attend the new reign—hopes not destined to be realised. One of these prophecies, couched in the allegorical form in which such dark sayings were usually put forth, was attributed to King Edward the Confessor on his death-bed. That such stories produced their effect upon the minds of men may serve to show the superstitious tendencies of the age. It is related that one of the old chroniclers, in his attempt to reconcile the two races, reproduced a statement copied from a writer still more ancient, to the effect that William the Conqueror was himself descended from Edmund Ironside. "Edmund," said the chronicle, "had, in addition to his two sons, an only daughter, who was banished the country for her licentious conduct, and whose beauty having attracted the attention of Duke Robert of Normandy, she became his mistress, and gave birth to William, surnamed the Bastard."



ENGLISH COSTUMES IN THE TIME OF HENRY II.

It was evident that the people had every desire to separate Henry from that hatred which they still cherished towards the Norman race; and they designated him as the corner-stone which was to unite the two walls of the state. On the other hand, the Norman nobles saw their king in his true character as the descendant of the Conqueror, and they knew that their own position was secure in the possession of wealth, power, and civil privileges.

When Henry landed in England, attended by a splendid escort, the people flocked to meet him, and tendered their congratulations. The cavalcade entered the royal city of Winchester, amidst the acclamations of the crowd, Queen Eleanor riding at the king's side. Having received the homage of the barons, the royal party proceeded to London, and on the 19th of December the coronation took place at Westminster.

The first act of the new king was to assemble a council, at which a royal decree was issued promising to the people of London those rights which they had enjoyed under the reign of Henry I., and the laws which that king had restored. Stephen was declared to have been a usurper, and all the institutions originated by him were at once abolished. Measures were taken to suppress the practice of false coining, which had become very common during the late reign, and the general currency having deteriorated, a new coinage was issued of standard weight and purity.

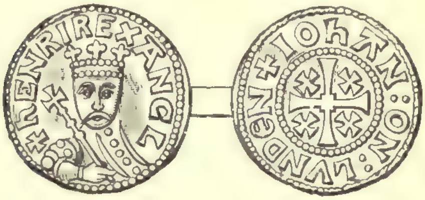
The Brabançons and other foreign mercenaries, who had become established in England during the civil war, had in many cases obtained possession of the castles and domains of the Norman adherents of Matilda, and had been confirmed in their titles by Stephen. The Norman nobles found themselves driven out, and their mansions fortified against them in the same manner that they themselves had seized the dwellings of the Saxons. When, therefore, the Brabançons and the Flemings were expelled by Henry, the whole of the Anglo-Normans experienced great exultation.

"We saw them," says Ralph de Diceto, a contemporary writer, "re-cross the sea, called back from the camp to the field, and from the sword to the plough; and those who had been lords were compelled to return to their old condition of serfs." The Normans who thus made a jest of the humble origin of the Flemings, conveniently enough forgot that their own fathers had quitted occupations of a similar kind to follow the fortunes of the Conqueror not a hundred years before. The men of the dominant race, who had acquired titles and estates in England, had driven from their minds all recollection of their former condition, and of the means by which their present eminence was obtained, although few of them could bear a favourable comparison in these respects with the later usurpers whom they delighted to revile. The English, however, did not forget the humble origin of their oppressors, and, according to Roger of Hoveden, they were accustomed to say of an arrogant earl or bishop of Norman origin, "He torments and goads us in the same manner that his grandfather used to beat the oxen at the plough."

The grants of land which had been made during the reign of Stephen had impoverished the state to such an extent that the revenues were inadequate to the support of the crown. Various gifts also had been made during the brief reign of Matilda, who found it necessary to reward her followers in the same manner as had been done by Stephen. Soon after the truce between Henry and the late king, a treaty had been signed at Winchester, according to which Stephen agreed to resume possession of the royal domains, which had been given to the nobles or taken by them forcibly; the only exceptions being grants of land to the Church and to Prince William, the surviving son of the king.

The provisions of this treaty had, however, not been carried out; and Henry, who had pressing need of money, and, at the same time, was determined to curb the growing power of the barons, called a council, and demanded the right to resume the domains of the crown. The council, on receiving the representations made to them of the king's necessities, gave their consent to the measure, and Henry placed himself at the head of a considerable force, for the purpose of expelling those barons who might refuse obedience to the order of the council. In this manner he passed through the country, reducing the fortresses one by one and, as fast as they came into his hands, causing them to be levelled with the ground. The castle of Bridgenorth, which was in the possession of Hugh de Mortimer, was stoutly defended by that chieftain; and during the siege, which lasted for some weeks, the king's life was saved by the self-devotion of one of his vassals. Henry was directing the attack in person, and had incautiously ventured under the castle walls, when an archer was observed taking aim at him. Hubert de St. Clair, one of his followers, immediately threw himself before the king, and received the arrow in his own breast. Henry supported him in his arms, and St. Clair expired in a few moments, entreating the king's protection for his only daughter, a child of tender years. The charge was accepted, and in after years was honourably fulfilled.

After considerable labour and many delays, Henry fully accomplished his designs. He destroyed the castles of Henry of Winchester, the brother of Stephen, who was compelled to quit the country. Other powerful chiefs, including the Earls of Albemarle and Nottingham, were also deprived of their estates; and the King of Scotland resigned his territories in the north of England in return for the earldom of Huntingdon, which was conferred upon him by Henry. It is related that more than 110 castles and strongholds, many of which were in the hands of men who grievously oppressed the people, or of licentious soldiers who lived by plunder, were destroyed in the course of this expedition. This act alone must have been of incalculable benefit to the country, and justified, to some extent, the expectations which had been formed from the character of the new monarch.


SILVER PENNY OF HENRY II.

In 1156 Geoffrey Plantagenet, the brother of Henry, having called upon him to relinquish the county of Anjou, received a refusal. Henry crossed the Channel with a considerable force, and having done homage to the French king, persuaded him to resign the cause of Geoffrey. The English army, composed of men of English descent, rejoiced at the opportunity of indulging in their long-desired vengeance against the Normans; and they engaged in the war with so much vigour and success that the cause of Geoffrey rapidly lost ground, and he was compelled to sue for terms of peace. A treaty was concluded, by which the younger brother resigned all claim to his lands and the title of the Count of Anjou, in return for a pension of 1,000 English or 2,000 Angevin pounds. In the following year (1157) he was elected to the government of Nantes.

Having reduced his brother to submission, Henry made a progress through his Continental provinces, attended by a splendid retinue, and was received everywhere with acclamations. He surrounded himself with the pomp and magnificence of royalty, in a manner which had never before been witnessed in his dominions, and which was equalled by no other monarch of his time.

Having returned to England in 1157, the king marched an army into Flintshire for the purpose of reducing the Welsh, who still fought bravely for independence, to permanent submission. No opposition was made to his advance until he reached the mountainous district about Coleshill Forest. Here the English troops were suddenly attacked by a large force, while passing through a narrow defile, where it was impossible to form in order of defence. The slaughter was very great. Several wealthy Norman nobles and knights of fame were dragged from their horses, and put to the sword; the Earl of Essex, the royal standard-bearer, threw down the standard and took to flight. Had the king not displayed those military talents which were hereditary in the family of the Conqueror, he would probably have shared the fate of his nobles, and the whole army would have been lost. Henry, however, drew his sword, and rushing into the midst of his flying troops, forced them to turn upon their assailants. Ultimately he fought his way through the pass, and collected his forces together in the open country. Owen Gwynned, a chief of the mountaineers, attempted to decoy him once more among the mountains; but Henry took his way to the sea-coast, and passed along the shore, building castles wherever an opportunity presented itself, and clearing portions of the country from the dense forests with which it was covered.

After a campaign of a few months, the Welsh gave in their submission to the king, and did homage for their territory. On the departure of the invaders, however, the mountaineers resumed their attitude of hostility, and made incursions into the surrounding country, at intervals, for many years afterwards. In consequence of his flight at the battle of Coleshill, the Earl of Essex was publicly accused of treason and cowardice by Robert de Montfort. The question was referred to a trial by arms, or a duel between the accuser and the accused, in the presence of the king and his court. The Earl of Essex was defeated in the combat; but the king, instead of sentencing him to death, as was customary in such cases, contented himself with seizing the estates of Essex, and condemning him to pass the rest of his life as a monk in Reading Abbey.

On the death of Geoffrey (1158) the city of Nantes fell under the authority of Conan, the hereditary Count of Brittany, who also possessed estates in Yorkshire, with the title of Earl of Richmond. Henry then set up a claim to the free city of Nantes, as a portion of the inheritance to which, as the heir of his brother, he was entitled. Actuated by the prospect of getting possession of the whole of Brittany, and affecting to regard

Conan as a usurper, Henry confiscated his estate and title of Richmond. Then crossing the Channel with a large army, the king appeared before the walls of Nantes, and compelled the citizens to expel Conan, and to pay allegiance to himself. Henry then garrisoned the town with a body of his troops, and took possession of the rest of the country between the Loire and the Vilaine.

HEROISM OF ST. CLAIR AT THE SIEGE OF BRIDGENORTH CASTLE. (*See p.* 182.)

Anticipating the alarm this great increase of his territory would cause in the French court, Henry sent there as ambassador Thomas Becket, and afterwards followed in person, and a treaty was concluded, by which the French king undertook to maintain his neutrality. Louis, after his divorce from Eleanor, had married Constance of Castile, who had borne to him a daughter. Henry affianced his eldest son to the young princess, who was delivered up to one of the Anglo-Norman barons, and her dower was confided to the custody of the knights of the Temple, to be restored on the celebration of the marriage.

Henry then proceeded to secure the possession of the whole of Brittany by an alliance with Conan, to whose daughter, then but five years old, he affianced his youngest son, Geoffrey, who was only eight years of age. By this treaty Conan was to keep Brittany for his life, on condition that at his death the future husband of his daughter was made heir to his power. The fears of the French king were aroused once more by this alliance, which it was evident would one day place the whole of western France under the power of the Anglo-Normans. Louis attempted to procure the Pope's interdict of the marriage, on the ground that Conan was the descendant of a bastard daughter of the grandfather of Henry II. The Pope Alexander III., however, refused to recognise such consanguinity, and the marriage was celebrated in the year 1166.

Not satisfied with the success which had hitherto attended his schemes of aggrandisement, Henry took proceedings to obtain Toulouse, preferring a claim in right of his wife, which certainly was without any just foundation. William, Duke of Aquitaine, the grandfather of Eleanor, had

BECKET BEFORE HIS ENEMIES IN THE COUNCIL HALL AT NORTHAMPTON.

married Philippa, the only daughter of William, Count of Toulouse. That portion of the Salic law which precluded a female succession being in operation in the country, the father of Philippa sold the province to his brother, Raymond of St. Gilles, whose posterity subsequently held possession of it. At the time of Eleanor's marriage with Louis, she had insisted upon her right to the county of Toulouse, and her husband had marched an army to defend the claim. The count, however, concluded an alliance with Constance, sister of the King of France, and by this means retained possession of his power.

Henry now proclaimed his right to the county on the same ground that Louis had previously preferred. Raymond of St. Gilles, grandson of the contemporary of the Conqueror, prepared to defend his patrimony, and applied for assistance to his brother-in-law, the King of France. While Louis was making ready to take the field, Henry adopted a measure, to which may probably be traced the decline of the feudal system in England. According to the laws, the service of a vassal to his sovereign in the field was limited to forty days—a period which would have been nearly consumed in transporting the English troops to the scene of action. Henry, therefore, determined to levy a sum of money in lieu of the services of his vassals, both in England and Normandy, and to apply the sum so raised to organising a body of troops, which would be free from all authority but his own, and would be ready to follow him without any limit of time. This tax was called the *scutage*, and amounted to three pounds English, or forty Angevin shillings, for each knight's fee. There are stated to have been 60,000 of these fees in England, which would, therefore, yield £180,000, an immense sum in those days.

The army thus raised by Henry was composed, for the most part, of the infantry of the Low Countries, who were already distinguished for their stubborn resolution and gallantry in combat. The king was accompanied by Thomas Becket, who had lately been made Chancellor of England, and also by Malcolm, King of Scotland, and Raymond, King of Arragon, with whom Henry had formed an alliance. The town of Cahors was quickly reduced, and the English army marched upon Toulouse, which was defended by the citizens under Raymond, in conjunction with a small body of troops which the King of France had marched to their assistance.

Becket, who, although in holy orders, marched in warlike equipments at the head of 700 knights and men-at-arms, displayed great energy in the field. He advised the king to take advantage of the weakness of the garrison, to make an immediate attack upon the place; but Henry, whose audacity was tempered by profound calculation, hesitated to commit an act in direct defiance of those feudal laws in whose support he had himself the strongest interest. As Count of Anjou, Henry was the hereditary Seneschal of France, and he asserted that he could not make an attack upon the troops of his feudal suzerain.

A second French army advancing to the defence of Toulouse, Henry raised the siege, and committing the command of his forces to Becket, returned with a small body of troops into Normandy. Thither the chancellor soon afterwards followed him, having taken possession of a few castles on the banks of the river Garonne. A campaign ensued, which lasted for a few months, on the frontiers of Normandy; and was brought to a conclusion in 1160 by a treaty, according to the terms of which the eldest son of Henry did homage to Louis for the dukedom of Normandy.

The condition of the people of Languedoc and the surrounding country, from this time, began rapidly to decline. Placed between two great powers whose rivalry resulted in frequent acts of hostility, the inhabitants attached themselves first to the cause of one and then to that of another, according to circumstances, and were by each alternately protected and deserted, betrayed and sold. From the time of the twelfth century, the people of the south enjoyed no tranquillity, except when the kings of France and England were at war. "We rejoice," said the troubadours in their songs, "when peace is broken between the Easterlings and Tornes," under which names they described the French and English. They possessed an early civilisation; but they appear to have been too much devoted to the pursuits of pleasure and the dreams of romance to be fitted for self-government. In addition to the disturbances which they suffered from without, they were engaged in perpetual quarrels amongst themselves. They were fond of war, but rather for the excitements it afforded than for the purposes of ambition. They loved the pomp and splendour of the tented field—the armour flashing in the sun—the turmoil and the struggle, the honour and reward. At a word from a fair lady, they were ready to fly off to Palestine, to engage in a quarrel about which they cared little, or were equally willing to risk their lives in hazardous and foolhardy achievements at home. They were a people in whom the gifts of imagination, and a taste for the beautiful in art and nature, were not restrained by prudence. Actuated by no spirit of union or foresight, they were content to bask carelessly in the passing sunshine, regardless of the future.

The peace between Henry and the King of France lasted only one month. The queen, Constance, died without leaving a son, and Louis, anxious to obtain an inheritor of his throne, contracted a union within three weeks afterwards with Adelais, niece of King Stephen and sister of the Count of Blois. By this alliance with his enemies, Henry perceived that his own connection with the French king was endangered, and having secretly obtained the authority of the Pope, he caused the marriage of his son Henry, who was seven years old, and the daughter of Louis, to be immediately solemnised. Henry, then, according to the terms of the treaty, obtained the dowry of the princess from the knights Templars, who were not prepared to resist at once the authority of the Pope and the power of the English king. Louis immediately declared war, and banished the Templars from his kingdom. Henry contented himself with defending his territories from the attacks made upon them until peace was once more concluded, through the intervention of the Pope.

At this period (1162), as had already been the case on a previous occasion, there were two Popes. One of these, Victor IV., occupied the papal chair at Rome, under the protection of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa of Germany; and the other, Alexander III., was living in exile in France. The latter was generally regarded in that country and in England as the legitimate pontiff, and Henry and Louis alike acknowledged his authority, vying with each other in offers of protection and in reverence. It is related by the Norman chronicler that when the two kings met Pope Alexander at the town of Courcy-sur-Loire, they dismounted from their horses, and each taking hold of one of the bridle reins of his mule, walked at his side on foot, and so conducted him to the castle.

The reconciliation thus effected was followed by a brief period of tranquillity, both in England and Normandy, and when the flame of war again broke out, its origin was to be referred to no foreign enemy, but to a man whom Henry had raised to the height of power and dignity.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE REIGN OF HENRY II. (*continued*).—CAREER OF THOMAS BECKET.

Early Life of Becket—Rapid Advance in the King's Service—Magnificence of his Embassy to Paris—The King, the Chancellor, and the Beggar—Depravity of the Clergy—Becket's Reforming Zeal—Appointed Archbishop of Canterbury—Extraordinary Change in his Habits—At Frequent Issue with the King—The Council of Clarendon—Becket Defies the King—Popularity with the People—His Flight from Northampton—Arrival at St. Omer—Obtains the Support of Louis and the Pope—Henry's Edict of Banishment—Defeat of the English by the Welsh—Insurrection in Brittany—Becket Excommunicates his Opponents—Henry's Anger—The Pope's Action against Becket—Interview between Becket and the King—The Two Reconciled—Return of Becket to England—His Christmas Sermon—The King's Fury—The Vow of the Conspirators—Scene in Becket's House—Murder of the Archbishop—Henry's Grief—Review of Becket's Career.

Thomas Becket, who was born in 1118, was the son of Gilbert Becket, a native of Rouen, a merchant, and at one time port-reeve of London. The youth was ambitious, and he quickly found means to turn his talents to account. He obtained the favour of one of the Norman barons who lived near London, and he joined in all the amusements of his patron. In this position his abilities acquired him a great reputation among the courtiers, to whom his ready wit recommended him, no less than the obsequious demeanour which he sedulously cultivated.

Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, having heard of the young Englishman, desired to see him, and having been pleased with the interview, took Becket into his service. He caused him to take deacon's orders, gave him the appointment of archdeacon of his church, and employed him in various negotiations with the Holy See. In the reign of Stephen, Becket was employed by the partisans of Matilda to procure the Pope's prohibition of the intended coronation of the king's son. The mission was attended with complete success, and on the accession of Henry II., Becket was presented to him as one who had done his cause good service. Henry extended his favour to the young archdeacon, and Theobald, the primate, who exercised the functions of first minister to the kingdom, finding his growing infirmities rendered him unfit for the duties of his office, delegated to Becket a great part of his power. A few years afterwards the archdeacon was raised to the office of Chancellor of England, or Keeper of the Seal of the Three Lions, which was the symbol of the Anglo-Norman power. The king also gave him the wardenship of the Tower of London and the castle of Berkhampstead, and placed in his hands the care and education of the heir to the throne.

These various appointments yielded large revenues, which were spent by Becket in the greatest luxury and magnificence. He kept in his house, which was furnished with great splendour, a numerous retinue; and it is related that there were in his pay 700 men-at-arms, well mounted and equipped. His tables were covered with choice viands, served upon costly plate; and the trappings of his horses were adorned with gold and silver. The haughtiest nobles of the court regarded it as an honour to visit this magnificent man; the foreigners who enjoyed his hospitality were never suffered to depart without some costly present.

It is related by Fitz-Stephen, who was Becket's secretary, that when the chancellor proceeded on his embassy to Paris, he was attended by many barons and lords, and a large body of knights, besides a great number of attendants and serving-men. His passage through France resembled a triumphal procession, and the train of sumpter-horses and wagons, the hounds and hawks, the falconers and pages, seemed worthy of some powerful king. When he entered a town 250 boys went before him singing songs; these were followed by huntsmen leading their hounds in couples; then came eight wagons, each drawn by five horses, and attended by five drivers; and these were succeeded by twelve sumpter-horses, on each of which rode a monkey with a groom behind on his knees. Next to the sumpter-horses came the esquires, each carrying the shield and leading the horse of his master; then the youths of gentle birth, who were also esquires, but were exempted from the more menial services of that office; then the knights, priests, and officers of the household; and, lastly, the chancellor himself, attended by his friends. As this procession passed through the towns, the people looked on with wonder, asking each other what manner of man the King of England must be when his chancellor travelled in such magnificence.

At this period Henry lived on the most intimate terms with the chancellor, who was skilled in the sports of the field, and whose wit and vivacity fitted him for a boon companion. The chancellor was not deterred by his sacred calling from sharing in the pleasures of the king. Henry, who could well support the royal dignity when occasion required, appears, according to a story of doubtful authenticity, to have had a natural tendency to gaiety and frolic. On one occasion, when the chancellor was riding at his side through the streets of London in stormy weather, there came towards the royal party a poor old man in tattered clothes. "Would it not be well," the king asked, "to give that poor man a warm cloak?" The chancellor replied with proper gravity, "It would, sir; and you do well to turn your eyes and thoughts to such objects." The king then immediately rejoined, "You shall have the merit of this act of charity;" and turning towards the chancellor, he seized hold of the new cloak which he wore, lined with ermine, and endeavoured to pull it from his back. Becket resisted for some time, and in the struggle both had nearly fallen from their horses to the ground; but at last the chancellor wisely let go the cloak, and the king gave it to the beggar, who went on his way wondering and rejoicing.

A man entirely delivered up to ambition is necessarily, to some extent, unscrupulous; and there is no doubt that Becket was content to sacrifice principle whenever it stood in the way of his advancement. He, however, possessed many good and great qualities; and during the period of his chancellorship, his influence with the king was used in promoting reforms and instituting measures which were calculated to promote, in a high degree, the welfare of the people. To his exertions may be attributed the restoration of tranquillity throughout the country, the revival of commerce, the reforms in the administration of the law, and the decline of the power of the barons. Although himself a churchman, Becket did not hesitate to attack the extravagant privileges of the bishops. At the time of the war against the Count of Toulouse, the clergy refused to pay the tax of scutage, which, as already related, was levied by Henry, giving as their reason that the Church forbade them to shed blood.* Becket, however, resolved to compel them to pay the tax; and while by so doing he exasperated his own order against him, he secured the goodwill of the king.

Not long after the Conquest the Norman clergy in England began to display great moral depravity. Murders, rapes, and robberies were frequently committed by them; and, according to the laws passed by the Conqueror on the institution of episcopal courts, the offenders could only be brought to justice by men of their own order. Thus it happened that the crimes committed by licentious priests were seldom punished, and they increased to a frightful extent in consequence of this immunity. It is related that from the time of the accession of Henry II. to the year 1161, not less than 100 homicides had been committed by priests who still remained securely in possession of their benefices. To put an end to these disorders, the only course which appeared feasible was to take away from the clerical order those privileges which had been conferred by the Conqueror, and Henry determined to execute this measure. The primacy of Canterbury had long carried with it an authority second only to that of the Pope himself, and it was impossible to carry out the intended reform unless a man devoted to the royal authority, and careless

HENRY II.

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* The scutage, or escutcheon-tax, was so called because it was due from all persons who possessed a knight's fee, or an estate which would maintain a man-at-arms, provided he failed to present himself at the stated time with his écu, escutcheon, or shield (Latin, *scutum*) upon his arm.

of the interests of the Church, were seated in the archiepiscopal chair. It was evident that for this purpose no fitter man could be found than Becket; and on the death of Theobald, the Archbishop of Canterbury (1161), the king recommended his chancellor to the bishops as the person to succeed to the primacy.

The chancellor was ordained priest, and on the following day was consecrated archbishop, and appointed to the vacant see. Immediately a change took place in him so remarkable that those who saw him found a difficulty in recognising him as the same man. He threw off his gorgeous apparel, removed the splendid furniture from his house, gave up the intimacy with the gay nobles, who had been his friends, and became the friend of the poor, the beggars, and the English. He even affected poverty, and amidst unbounded wealth, and in the possession of power second only to that of the throne, lived the life of an anchorite. He was clothed in a coarse gown, allowed himself only herbs and water for sustenance, and assumed a deportment of the utmost gravity and humility. Thus Becket at once kicked down from him the ladder by which he had risen, and now, no longer obsequious towards his sovereign, he determined to maintain to the utmost the privileges of the Church. Never was there a change of life more sudden, or one that excited so much indignation, on the one hand, or so much admiration on the other. The new archbishop became the idol of the poor, and especially of his own countrymen, while the king and his favourites regarded him with the deepest anger and aversion.

Under these circumstances it was evident that a rupture must soon take place. Becket began the struggle; he claimed a number of estates and castles, including that of Rochester, from the king, and that of Tunbridge from the Earl of Clare, on the ground that they had originally belonged to the see of Canterbury. Had such restitution been given it would have tended to overthrow the legal claim of many of the barons to their estates; great alarm was, therefore, excited, and the demand met with a determined resistance. The barons urged their prescriptive rights, but Becket replied briefly that there could be no prescription for injustice, and that the estates wrongly obtained must be restored.

The archbishop proceeded to follow up his attack by appointing a priest to a benefice on the lands of a Norman baron, named William de Eynsford. William, like the rest of the Normans, assumed the right of disposing of the churches on his manor, and he expelled the priest sent by Becket. The baron was immediately excommunicated by the archbishop in defiance of a law passed by Henry, that no vassal of the crown should be excommunicated without the royal consent. The king ordered the sentence to be remitted, and after some delay Becket yielded, though with evident reluctance. The king's animosity was rather increased than appeased by a consent so reluctantly given.

In the year 1164, Henry proceeded to mature his plans for placing the clergy under civil jurisdiction; and at a general assembly of lords, lay and spiritual, he demanded the consent of the prelates to the proposed revival of ancient customs, now called the constitutions of Clarendon, by which the criminous clerks were to be made amenable to the secular courts. The reply made by Becket and his coadjutors was that they assented, "saving the rights of their order." The king angrily broke up the council, and deprived the archbishop of the castles of Berkhampstead and Eye. A few days afterwards Becket expressed his readiness to assent to the king's demands, and a great council was convened at Clarendon in Wiltshire (March, 1164), for the purpose of receiving the assent formally. When the moment came for Becket's signature to be given, he refused it; accusing himself of folly for having promised to observe the king's laws, whatever they might be. The entreaties of the barons were without effect, and the enactments were completed without his signature.

The king now proceeded to more severe measures against his former favourite. Another council was called at Northampton, before which Becket was summoned to appear, and was charged with contempt of the king's authority. He was called upon to pay various heavy fines, and to give an account of his receipts from different benefices during his chancellorship—the balance due to the crown, which he had kept back, being stated to be 44,000 marks. Becket was now convinced that his ruin had been determined on, and for several days he was confined to his bed by illness, brought on by these anxieties, and was unable to determine on the course he ought to pursue. At length his indomitable mind recovered its ordinary tone, and he determined to resist the decision of the king and the council. Having celebrated mass, he proceeded to the court dressed in his robes, and holding in his right hand the archiepiscopal cross. As he entered the hall, the king, indignant at seeing him in the robes of authority, rose up and passed into an inner room, leaving the archbishop standing in the hall. Becket, who remained calm and undaunted, seated himself on a bench, holding his cross erect. Presently the Bishop of Exeter entered, and, in the name of his colleagues, entreated the primate to obey the king's commands. A refusal was followed by the entrance of the rest of the bishops, who renounced him as their primate, and appealed to the authority of the Pope. Becket sternly answered, "I hear;" and made no other reply.

According to one of the chroniclers, the archbishop was accused before the council of magic arts, and the Earl of Leicester advanced into the hall to read his sentence; but Becket, interrupting him, refused to recognise the authority of a lay tribunal, and himself appealed to the Pope's decision. With these words he rose from his seat, and carrying the cross in his hand, strode slowly through the crowd towards the door of the hall. A murmur arose as he passed, and some of the courtiers, whose mean spirit derived satisfaction from striking a falling man, accused him of perjury and treason, and catching up straw from the floor, threw it in his face. Becket stopped short, and facing his assailants, said, in cold and haughty tones, but with high spirit, "If the sacredness of my order did not forbid it, I would answer with arms those who call me perjurer and traitor." He then mounted his horse, and proceeded to the house where he lodged, followed by a crowd of the inferior clergy and the people, among whom he was exceedingly popular, and who received him with acclamations.

Rejected by the rich, the archbishop opened his house to the poor. That same night he caused a bountiful supper to be laid out in the hall, and in all the chambers of the house. The doors were then thrown open, and the beggar by the wayside, the outcast, and the hungry, were invited to enter freely. All who came were made welcome, so that the house was filled with guests—the archbishop himself supping with them, and presiding at the repast.

In the dead of night, when the visitors at this strange banquet had taken their fill, and departed, Becket disguised himself in the dress of a monk, and, accompanied by two friars, escaped from the town of Northampton. A hasty journey of three days brought him to the fens of Lincolnshire, where he remained a little while concealed in a hermit's hut. On resuming his journey he passed without suspicion to the coast. It was at the end of November, and the weather was cold and stormy; but the archbishop preferred the risks of the sea to those which awaited him on shore. and, embarking in a small boat, reached the harbour of Gravelines in safety. Thence he resumed his journey, as before, on foot. After encountering many privations, the primate and his companions at length reached the monastery of St. Bertin, in the town of St. Omer.

Here Becket waited the result of the applications he had made to Louis of France, and to Pope Alexander III. It was not long before replies were returned entirely in his favour. Louis was glad of an opportunity of annoying and injuring Henry by extending protection to the archbishop, and Alexander supported his cause, as being that of the Church and of justice. He was desired to retain the archiepiscopal dignity, which he had resigned into the hands of the Pope, and the abbey of Pontigny, in Burgundy, was given to him as a place of residence.

On the news of Becket's flight, the king immediately proclaimed a sentence of banishment against all the kindred of the archbishop, young and old, women and children. It is even said that these unhappy exiles were made to swear they would present themselves before Becket, so that he might see the misery of which he had been the cause. Thus it happened that his retirement at Pontigny was disturbed by the visits of these poor people, who vainly implored him to obtain the remission of their sentence. Becket relieved their wants as far as he could and obtained for many of them the protection of the Pope and the King of France.

The banished prelate appears to have supported with contentment his sudden loss of power and return to the condition of poverty. His life at this period was, however, far from being an idle one. Much of his time was occupied in writing; and he received frequent letters both from friends and enemies. The English bishops sent him epistles full of reproaches, for no other reason than to add to the weight of misfortune and humiliation which pressed heavily upon him. The lower ranks of the people, however, retained their attachment to him, and secret prayers were offered up for his success in his undertakings, and for his safe return.

Meanwhile Henry had conducted an expedition into Wales, which resulted in a complete defeat of the royal forces. In 1164, a young man, nephew of Rees-ap-Gryffith, King of South Wales, was found dead under suspicious circumstances; and it was believed that he had been murdered by persons in the employ of a Norman baron of the neighbourhood. To avenge his death, Rees-ap-

REPULSE OF THE ENGLISH AT CORWEN. (*See p.* 193.)

Gryffith collected troops from all parts of the Welsh mountains, and made successful inroads upon the neighbouring counties. The king, quitting for a time his quarrel with Becket, gathered a considerable army, and in 1165 passed into Wales. The rebels gave way before him, retreating, as their custom was, to the shelter of the mountains. Henry, however, overtook them before they had gained their fastnesses, and defeated them in an engagement. Pursuing them still farther, the English troops reached Corwen, where they pitched their encampment. A violent storm arose, and the streams which poured down from the hills deluged the camp and flooded the valley. The mountaineers took advantage of this circumstance, and, collecting on the ridges near Corwen, attacked the disordered forces of the king, and defeated them with considerable loss. Henry, who on ordinary occasions was less addicted to acts of cruelty than had been the case with his ancestors, was subject to fits of ungovernable passion; and he now determined to revenge himself upon the persons of the hostages who had been placed in his hands in 1158 by the Welsh chiefs. The men had their eyes torn out, and the faces of the women were mutilated by having their noses and ears cut off. It is related that the unhappy victims of these barbarities were the sons and daughters of the noblest families in Wales.

Soon after the return of Henry from this expedition, an insurrection broke out in 1166 in Brittany, which compelled his presence in that province. The government of Conan dissatisfied the people, who were oppressed by the Breton nobles, and could obtain no redress from their prince. Henry entered Brittany with a large body of troops, and was met by a deputation of the priests and the people, who placed the redress of their grievances in his hands. Conan was compelled to resign his authority, and the government passed into the hands of Henry, under the name of his son Geoffrey, who, as we have seen, was married to the daughter of Conan. The country, however, was not restored to tranquillity. Other disturbances took place in various places, and were put down one after the other by Henry, who at length succeeded in overcoming all opposition to his government. He instituted various reforms, and encouraged trade, and, under his rule, the land once more enjoyed prosperity.

INTERVIEW BETWEEN BECKET AND KING HENRY. (*See p.* 194.)

When the news of the king's arrival on the Continent reached Thomas Becket, he left Pontigny, and proceeded to Vezelay, near Auxerre. At the festival of the Ascension, Becket addressed the crowd assembled in the great church, and while the bells were solemnly tolled, and the candles burnt at the altar, the archbishop pronounced sentence of excommunication against all who held to the

Constitutions of Clarendon, or kept possession of the property of the see of Canterbury. He mentioned by name several of the Norman favourites of the king, and among others Richard de Lucy, Ranulph de Broc, and Jocelyn of Balliol.

When Henry heard of this new act of hostility on the part of Becket, he was at Chinon, in Anjou. Allusion has already been made to the fits of passion with which he was sometimes seized, and on this occasion his fury was altogether ungovernable. He exclaimed that it was attempted to kill him body and soul; that he was surrounded by none but traitors, who would not attempt to relieve him from the persecutions inflicted upon him by one man. He threw his cap from his head, flung off his clothes, and rolling himself in the coverlet of his bed, began to tear it to pieces with his teeth. When his passion had in some degree subsided, he wrote letters to the King of France and to the Pope, demanding that the sentences of excommunication should be annulled, and threatening that if Becket continued to receive shelter from the Cistercians at Pontigny, all the estates in the king's dominions belonging to that order should be confiscated. The Pope promised the king the satisfaction he required, and Becket, driven from his asylum at Pontigny, removed to Sens, where he remained under the protection of the King of France.

A series of petty wars now took place between Louis and Henry, and were concluded by a peace in 1169. The matrimonial alliance previously agreed upon between Louis and the King of Arragon was broken off, and the Princess Alice of France was betrothed to Richard, second son of Henry. At the time when this treaty was concluded, efforts were made by the Pope and the King of France to effect a reconciliation between Henry and Becket. A meeting took place between the two kings at Montmirail, and thither Becket, having consented to give in his submission to his sovereign, was conducted. When the archbishop arrived in the king's presence, he expressed his willingness to submit to him in all things; but he introduced the qualifying clause which he had formerly used—"saving our order." The king angrily rejected such obedience, saying that whatever displeased Becket would be declared to be contrary to the honour of God, and that these few words would take away all the royal authority. The archbishop insisting on such a reservation, the nobles present accused him of inordinate pride, and the two kings rode away from the spot without giving him any salutation.

Another conference which took place was also broken off suddenly, and resulted in a quarrel between Louis and Henry. Peace was, however, once more established between them, and Henry, fearing that the Pope might sanction Becket's proceedings, and permit him to lay all England under interdict, reluctantly promised to conclude final terms of reconciliation with the archbishop. On the 22nd of July, 1170, a solemn congress was held in a meadow between Freteval and La Ferte-Bernard, in Touraine. After terms of peace had been arranged between the two kings, a private conference took place between Henry and Becket. They rode together to a distant part of the field, and conversed with something of their old familiarity. The king promised to redress the grievances of which Becket complained, and the usual forms of reconciliation took place, with the exception of the kiss of peace, which the king now, as on a previous occasion, refused to give. "We shall meet in our own country," said the king, "and then we will embrace." Becket undertook to render to the king all due and loyal service, while Henry promised to restore the privileges and estates of the see of Canterbury. It is related that, to the astonishment of all present, when Becket bended the knee on parting from his sovereign, the king returned the courtesy by holding the stirrups of the man whom he had refused to kiss.

Some delay took place on the king's part in the fulfilment of these conditions, and Becket, who was compelled to borrow money to make the journey, remained for awhile on the coast of France. Sinister rumours reached him there; he was told that enemies were lying in wait for him in England, and that if he again set foot in that country it would be at the risk of his life. The lands of the Church could be restored only by driving out the possessors, who were haughty barons, not unlikely to seek vengeance on the man to whom they owed their ruin. Deadly enemies of Becket were found also among men of his own order. He carried with him the Pope's letter of excommunication against the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of London, who would probably accept any means of escaping the impending disgrace. Considerations such as these, however, had never deterred Becket in the execution of his plans, and did not in the least affect him now. With a spirit untamed by reverses he declared that he would go back to England though he were sure of losing his life on touching the shore. The letters of excommunication he forwarded before him by a trusty messenger, who delivered them in public to the prelates whom they concerned.

A vessel having been sent by Henry to convey him to England, he landed at Sandwich, December 1, 1170, and was received with great rejoicings by the people, who flocked from all parts of the neighbourhood to meet him. The nobles, however, held aloof, and the few whom he saw did not attempt to conceal their hostility. Three barons, who met him on his way to Canterbury, are said to have drawn their swords and threatened his life, and were only restrained from violence by the entreaties of John of Oxford, the king's chaplain, who had accompanied Becket from France.

Proceeding on his way, the archbishop passed through Canterbury to Woodstock, where he endeavoured to obtain an interview with Prince Henry, the eldest son of the king. The interview was forbidden by the royal command, and Becket was ordered to proceed at once to his diocese, and there to remain. The time of Christmas was approaching, and the archbishop retraced his steps, escorted on the way by the poor people, armed with such coarse weapons as they could obtain. Various insults were offered to the prelate by persons of the opposite party, who were anxious to provoke his followers to a quarrel, which would afford a pretext for attacking and murdering him. His faithful guard, however, contented themselves with protecting the person of the archbishop, and received these insults with imperturbable coolness.

The royal order which confined the primate to his diocese was published in the towns, and with it another edict was made known, which declared that whoever looked upon him with favour should be regarded as an enemy of the king and the country. Signs like these were not to be mistaken; and it scarcely needed the acute intellect and foresight of Becket to perceive that his end was approaching. On Christmas day he preached to the assembled crowd in Canterbury Cathedral, choosing as his text the solemn words, "I have come to die among you." He told the people that whereas one of their archbishops had already been a martyr, another would soon be so also; but he declared that before he died he would avenge some of the wrongs which had been inflicted upon the Church. He then proceeded to excommunicate several of those persons from whom he had received insults since his return to England.

The prediction of Becket was soon followed by its fulfilment. The three bishops who had been excommunicated by the Pope's letters immediately hastened to cross the Channel, and presenting themselves before Henry in Normandy, demanded redress. "We entreat you," they said, "in the name of your kingdom and its prelates. This man is setting England in flames. He marches with a number of armed men, both horse and foot, going about the fortresses, and endeavouring to obtain admission into them." Henry heard this statement, and burst out into a violent fit of rage. "What!" he cried; "a man who has eaten my bread—a beggar who first came to my court riding a lame pack-horse, with his baggage at his back—shall he insult the king, the royal family, and the whole kingdom, and not one of the cowards who eat at my table will deliver me from such a turbulent priest?"

These words proved to be the death-warrant of the archbishop. Four knights who were present, Richard Brito, Hugh de Morville, William Tracy, and Reginald Fitzurse, bound themselves by an oath to support each other to the death, and suddenly departed from the palace. There is no evidence that the king was acquainted with their design, or anticipated that his hasty words would be so speedily acted upon. On the contrary, it is recorded that, while the knights were hastening towards the coast, a council of the barons of Normandy, assembled by the king, was engaged in appointing three commissioners to seize the person of Thomas Becket, and place him in prison on a charge of high treason.

The conspirators had departed, and, if their absence was perceived, its cause was not suspected. On the 29th of December they arrived in the neighbourhood of Canterbury, and having collected a number of armed men, to overcome any resistance that might be offered, they first summoned the mayor, and called upon him to march the citizens who were armed for the king's service to the house of the archbishop. On his refusal they proceeded thither without more delay, and the four conspirators, with twelve men, abruptly entered the archbishop's apartment. Becket was at the dinner-table, with his servants in attendance. He saluted the Normans, and desired to know what they wanted. They made no reply, but sat down gazing at him intently for some minutes. At length Reginald Fitzurse rose up and said that they were come from the king to demand that the persons excommunicated should be absolved, the suspended bishops restored to their benefices, and that Becket himself should answer the charge of treason against the throne. The archbishop replied that not he, but the Pope, had excommunicated the bishops, and that he only could absolve them. "From whom, then, do you hold your bishopric?"

Fitzurse demanded. "The spiritual rights I hold from God and the Pope, and the temporal rights from the king." "What, then, the king did not give you all?" "By no means." This reply was received with murmurs by the knights, who twirled their gauntlets impatiently. "I perceive that you threaten me," the archbishop said; "but it is in vain. If all the swords in England were hanging over my head, they would not alter my determination." "We do indeed dare to threaten," said Fitzurse; "and we will do more." With these words he moved to the door, followed by the others, and gave the call to arms.

The door of the room was instantly closed, and the attendants of Becket entreated him to take refuge in the church, which communicated with the house by a cloister. He, however, retained his place, although the blows of an axe, which Fitzurse had obtained outside, resounded against the door. At this moment the sound of the vesper bell was heard, and Becket then rose up, and said that, since the hour of his duty had arrived, he would go into the church. Directing his cross to be carried before him, he passed slowly through the cloisters, and advanced to the choir, which was enclosed by a railing. While he was ascending the steps leading to the choir, Reginald Fitzurse entered the door of the church clad in complete armour, and, waving his sword, cried, "Come hither, servants of the king!" The other conspirators immediately followed him armed to the teeth, and brandishing their swords.

It was already twilight, which, within the walls of the dimly-lighted church, had deepened into blackest obscurity. Becket's attendants entreated him to fly to the winding staircase which led to the roof of the building, or to seek refuge in the vaults underground. He rejected both of these expedients, and stood still to meet his assailants. "Where is the traitor?" cried a voice. There was no answer. "Where is the archbishop?" "Here I am," Becket replied; "but here is no traitor. What do ye in the house of God in warlike equipment?" One of the knights seized him by the sleeve, telling him that he was a prisoner. He pulled back his arm violently. It is related that they then advised him to fly or to go with them, as though they repented of their evil design. The time and the scene, the sacred office of Becket, and his calm courage, were well calculated to make an impression upon men peculiarly susceptible to such influences, and if they hesitated we must attribute it to these causes rather than doubt the ruthless intention with which they came.

Once more they called upon him to absolve the bishops; once more he refused, and Fitzurse, drawing his sword, struck at his head. The blow was intercepted by the arm of one of the prelate's servants, who stepped forward to protect his master, but in vain. A second blow descended, and while the blood was streaming from his face, some one of his assailants whispered him to fly and save himself. Becket paid no heed to the speaker, but clasped his hands and bowed his head, commending his soul to God and the saints. The conspirators now fell upon him with their swords, and quickly despatched him. One of them is said to have kicked the prostrate body, saying, "So perishes a traitor."

The deed thus accomplished, the conspirators passed out of the town without hindrance, but no sooner had they done so than the news spread throughout the town, and the inhabitants, in the utmost excitement and indignation, assembled in crowds in the streets, and ran towards the cathedral. Seeing the body of their archbishop stretched before the altar, men and women began to weep, and while some kissed his feet and hands, others dipped linen in the blood with which the pavement was covered. It was declared by the people that Becket was a martyr, and though a royal edict was published forbidding any one to express such an opinion, the popular feeling still manifested itself. The Archbishop of York returned to his pulpit, and announced the violent death of the archbishop to be a judgment from heaven, and that he had perished in his pride, like Pharaoh. It was preached by other bishops that the body of the traitor ought not to be laid in holy ground, but that it should be left to rot on the highway, or hung from a gibbet. It was even attempted by some soldiers to seize the corpse; but the monks, who had received an intimation of the design, buried it hastily in the crypt of the cathedral.

Louis, King of France, seconded the feeling of the English people with regard to this cowardly murder. He wrote to the Pope, entreating him to punish with all the power of the Church that persecutor of God; a Nero in cruelty, a Julian in apostacy, and a Judas in treachery.

The opinion of the French court was that Henry was guilty of the murder, having known or directed the designs of the conspirators. When the intelligence was first conveyed to him, he displayed extreme grief, shutting himself up within a private room, and refusing either to see his friends or to taste food for three days. He immediately sent legates to Rome, to offer assurances of his

THE DEATH OF BECKET.

innocence to the Pope Alexander, who threatened to place the whole kingdom under an interdict, as a punishment for the outrage upon Heaven and the Church. Some time elapsed before Alexander changed his purpose and was prevailed upon to confine his anathema to the actual murderers and their abettors.

In the year 1172 a council was held at Avranches, at which the king and the legates of the Pope were present, and which was attended by a great multitude, both of the clergy and of the people. Here Henry voluntarily swore, in what was considered the most solemn manner—that is to say, over the sacred relics—that he had no concern in the murder of the archbishop, and that he had not desired his death.

On reviewing the remarkable career of Thomas Becket, it appears extremely difficult to form a just estimate of his character. That he frequently acted independently of principle, and displayed qualities better suited to a soldier than a priest, is beyond question. That his sudden conversion was mere hypocrisy, his piety assumed, and his aims altogether selfish — accusations which have frequently been brought against him—is much less certain. When the religious habit was first assumed by Becket, he accepted it as a step to power, and with little regard for the sacred functions it conferred upon him; but when he was called to a higher office, and he felt that the dignity of his order was placed in his keeping, he determined to support that dignity. What was the precise character of the motives which actuated him it is vain to inquire; but it is at least possible that he was sincere in the course he pursued, and that he believed the interests of religion to be identified with the power of the Church. Allusion has already been made to the benefits conferred upon the nation by the reforms which he introduced, and to the veneration with which the people regarded him. The popular regard is not always to be taken as a criterion of excellence, for men are apt to be attracted by a showy and noisy benevolence rather than by silent and unobtrusive virtue; but in process of time the true is distinguished from the false, and the instincts of the people are rarely long deceived. Neither the mitre which he wore, nor the English blood which flowed in his veins, could have placed the archbishop so high in the affections of the nation, unless there had been also high and sterling qualities in the man. Well-authenticated accounts have reached us of his conduct at the time of his death—that hour when the mask of the hypocrite usually falls away, and something of his true character seldom fails to show itself. At this time, then, we find Thomas Becket presented to us in an aspect which must command the respect even of those who take the worst view of his previous life. With far more courage than his knightly assassins, we see him refusing to attempt a flight, which might have shown a consciousness of guilt; preserving, in the face of death, a calm and undaunted brow; and, as we are told by one of the chroniclers, employing his last words in securing the safety of his friends and servants.*

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* On being told that he must die, Becket replied, "I resign myself to death; but I forbid you, in the name of the Almighty God, to injure any of those round me, whether monk or layman, great or small."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE REIGN OF HENRY II. (*concluded*).

Events in Ireland—The Irish People—Henry's Designs in Ireland—Nicholas Breakspeare (Pope Adrian IV.)—The King of Leinster's Outrage—Dermot obtains Henry's Patronage—Siege of Wexford—Strongbow in Ireland—Siege of Waterford—Henry and the Norman Successes in Ireland—Arrival of Henry near Waterford—His Court in Dublin—The King Returns to England—His Eldest Son Rebels—The Younger Henry at the French Court—The English King's Measures of Defence—Defeat of the Insurgent Princes—Success of the King's Cause in England—Henry's Penance—Capture of King William of Scotland—Revival of Henry's Popularity—The King Forgives his Rebellious Sons—Period of Tranquillity—Fresh Family Feuds—The King at Limoges—Death of Princes Henry and Geoffrey—Affairs in Palestine—The Pope's Call to Arms for the Cross—The Saladin Tithe—Richard's Quarrel with his Father—Henry Sues for Peace—The Conference at Colombières—Death of the King—Richard before his Father's Corpse—Character of Henry II.—The Story of Fair Rosamond.

WHILE the life of Thomas Becket was drawing to a close, events were taking place in Ireland which led to the submission of that country to the English crown. It does not fall within the scope of this history to relate in detail the various internal quarrels and disturbances which ultimately placed the island at the mercy of a small invading force; it is sufficient to glance briefly at the condition of the people, and the position of affairs at the time to which we are now referring.

The inhabitants of the island, called in ancient tongues Ibernia, or Erin, were undoubtedly of Celtic origin, as the language still spoken by a majority of the people serves to prove. The dominant race were known as the Scots or Milesians (horsemen), and from them came the settlers who gave Scotland its name. The Irish were distinguished from the Germanic races by their strong passions—either of love or hate—and their enthusiastic temper. Previous to the introduction of Christianity their condition appears to have been entirely uncivilised; those old fragments of Irish history which would lead us to a different conclusion being little else than fables and bardic traditions. When Christianity was carried into the country, the people embraced it readily. Poetry and literature were cultivated to a greater extent than in any other part of western Europe, and remained in a flourishing condition, while the learning of the Continent was on a decline. This advance of civilisation is to be referred to the labours of the celebrated St. Patrick, who was born at Bonavem Taberniæ, probably identical with Kilpatrick in Dumbartonshire. He entered upon his apostolic mission in 425, and died, at an advanced age, in 458. The immediate results of his teaching were seen in the erection of many churches and monasteries, in which literature was cultivated with so much success, that students repaired to the Irish schools from all parts of Europe. This state of things endured for several centuries, until a permanent check was given to the progress of learning by the incursions of the Northmen, who, from the year 748 to the middle of the tenth century, continually visited the country.

At the period of the English invasion, the people of Ireland are described as being of tall and elegant forms, and having a ruddy complexion. Their clothing was of the simplest kind, and was spun from the wool of their sheep. The art of war had made little progress among them; and their arms consisted of a short lance, or javelin, a sword about fifteen inches in length, and a hatchet of steel. Their houses were built of wood, interlaced with wicker-work, in a manner which displayed considerable ingenuity. They were extremely fond of music, and in the use of their favourite instrument, the harp, they excelled the neighbouring nations. Giraldus Cambrensis,* who has left us an account of the conquest of Ireland, admits their superiority in this respect.

When Henry ascended the English throne, he entertained the project of taking possession of Ireland; and, following the example of the Conqueror, he first took measures to obtain the sanction and assistance of the Pope to his enterprise. The papal chair was at that time occupied by Nicholas Breakspeare, called Adrian IV., the only Englishman who ever wore the tiara. He was a man of obscure birth, but of considerable intelligence, who had quitted his native land at an early age, and travelled through France to Italy,

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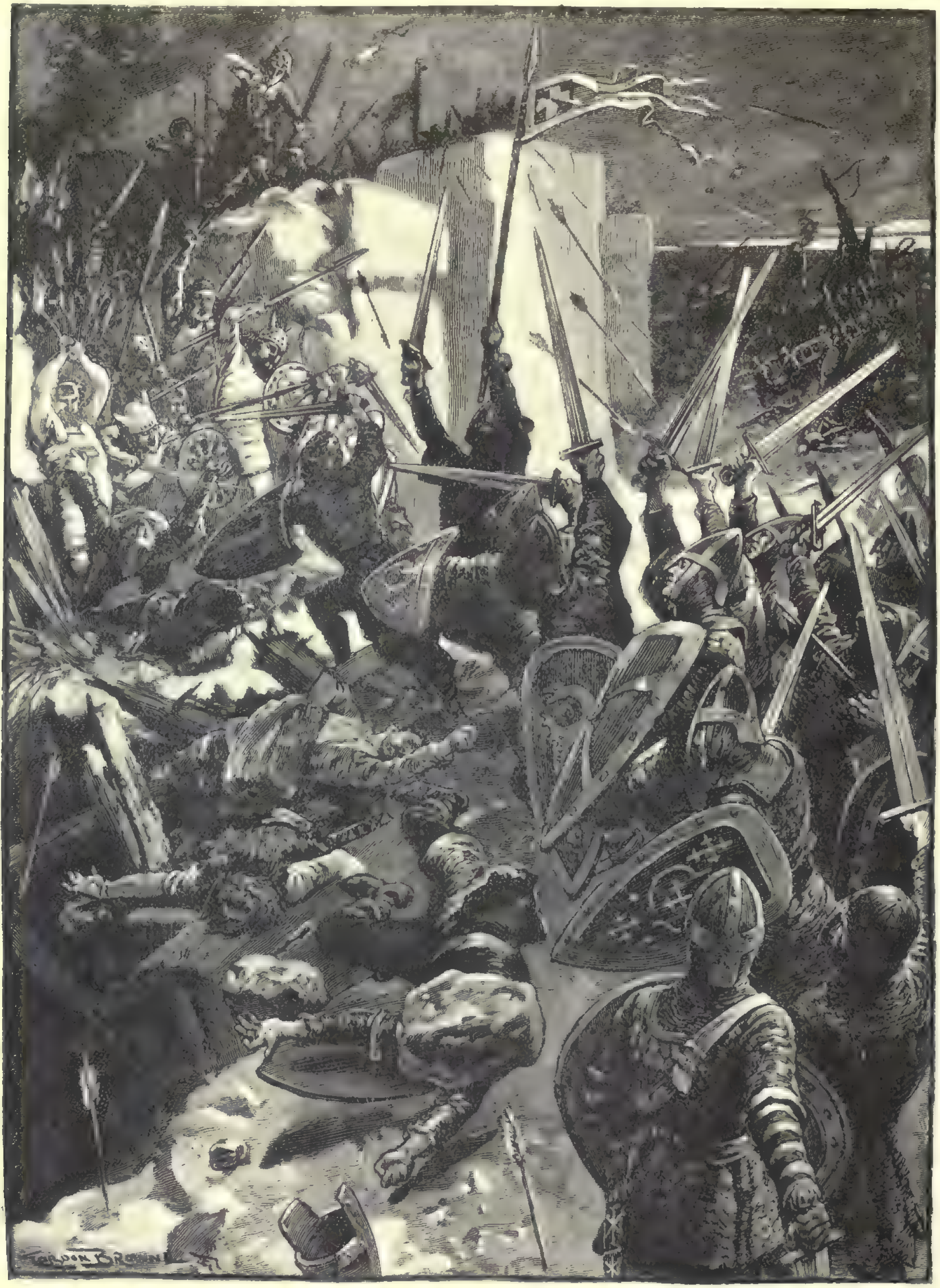
* Gerald de Barry, commonly known as Giraldus Cambrensis (or Gerald the Welshman), was the grandson of a Norman and a Welshwoman, and was born in Wales. He was present in Ireland during the time of many of the events about to be related.



THE SIEGE OF WATERFORD. *(See p. 201.)*

where he entered an abbey as secretary. Unaided by wealth or connections, his abilities gradually raised him to the dignity of abbot, from which he rose to be bishop, and ultimately Pope. Adrian assented to the request of Henry, and issued a bull, authorising him to undertake the conquest of Ireland. The king, however, was deterred, by the advice of his counsellors, and by the urgency of other affairs, from entering upon the expedition at that time, and the papal bull was deposited in the royal treasury at Winchester, without being promulgated.

Fourteen years later, some Norman and Flemish adventurers, who had previously settled in Wales, were invited to Ireland by one of the native princes. Dervorgilla, a lady of remarkable beauty, wife of Tiernan O'Rourke, a powerful chief, was carried off by Dermot MacMurrogh, King of Leinster. Dermot, who was a man of cruel and arrogant temper, had many enemies, and he now found himself attacked on different sides by O'Rourke, and those who supported his cause. Ultimately a general combination was formed against the King of Leinster, and he was compelled to quit the country.

He proceeded to ask the support of King Henry, who was then in Aquitaine. Henry, occupied at that time with other affairs of importance, received him graciously, and gave him letters, authorising the subjects of the English crown to take up arms in his favour. Furnished with these, Dermot returned to England, and, after some delay, he obtained the assistance of Richard de Clare, surnamed Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, to whom he promised his daughter Eva in marriage. Subsequently he made arrangements with Robert Fitz-Stephen and Maurice Fitz-Gerald, to whom he agreed to give the town of Wexford, with other rewards, in return for the services they were to render him.

In the year 1169, Fitz-Stephen, with his companions, accompanied by 140 knights and 300 men-at-arms, crossed over to Ireland, and landed at Bannock Bay. MacMurrogh, who had previously returned to the country, and had remained in concealment, advanced to meet his friends. The combined forces having attacked and reduced Wexford, advanced against the Prince of Ossory, whom they defeated with great slaughter. The Normans slew their adversaries, who possessed no defensive armour, and cut off their heads with their battle-axes. It is related that three hundred bleeding heads were brought and laid before MacMurrogh, and that he turned them over to see which of his enemies had been slain. On coming to the head of one against whom he had a mortal hatred, he took it up by the hair, and, "horribly and cruelly, tore away the nose and lips with his teeth." This savage chieftain, however, had a regard for his plighted word, and he fulfilled his promise of placing Fitz-Stephen in possession of Wexford, while districts on the coast between Waterford and Wexford were given to others of his allies. These gifts of territory to foreigners called forth the utmost indignation among the Irish confederate chiefs, who, at a council held at the royal seat of Tara, in Meath, declared the King of Leinster to be a national enemy, and prepared to make common cause against him.

Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, did not set sail for Ireland until 1170. He landed near to Waterford, with a force of two hundred knights and two thousand men, and was immediately joined by the Normans who had preceded him. The combined forces, having been arranged in battle array, and with banners flying, advanced to attack the city. The citizens made a gallant resistance, and were probably excited to desperation by the ruthless character of MacMurrogh, and the fate which they expected would await those who might fall into his hands. The Earl of Pembroke, who was well skilled in the art of war, had command of the forces, and led the assault. A little house of timber, standing half upon posts, was observed without the walls, and the assailants having hewn down the posts, the house fell, together with a piece of the wall. The troops poured through the breach thus made, and captured the city, killing the inhabitants without mercy.

Leaving a strong garrison, the Normans marched to Dublin, which town, as well as that of Waterford, had been founded by the Danes. Supported by reinforcements raised by MacMurrogh, the invaders took the city of Dublin with little resistance, and, elated by a course of uninterrupted successes, made incursions upon the surrounding country. King Henry, however, received the news of these events, and his jealousy being excited at such an important conquest being attained by his vassals, he issued a proclamation forbidding any vessel to leave his dominions for Ireland, and ordered all his subjects then in that country to return to England by the next Easter, on pain of the forfeiture of all their estates, and of perpetual banishment from the realm. A consultation was held among the Normans, and Raymond Fitz-William, surnamed Le Gros, nephew of Fitz-Gerald and Fitz-Stephen, was despatched on a mission to Henry, to prevail upon him to recall the proclamation, and to remind him of the letters he had given to MacMurrogh, authorising Englishmen to take up arms in his cause. Henry received the message without returning any answer, or, according to some of the chroniclers, he replied by confiscating the estates of Strongbow in Wales.

While the earl thus found himself cut off from all reinforcements of men and arms, the Normans in Leinster were suddenly attacked by the men of Danish race who were settled on the north-east coast of Ireland, and who now allied themselves with the natives against the new invaders. They attacked Dublin, but without success. The Normans, however, dreading the formidable league against them, made a second application to Henry through Hervey Fitz-Maurice. Strongbow himself was then ordered to proceed to the court, and after some delay he obtained an audience. The earl agreed to surrender to the king the town of Dublin, with the larger of the other towns on the coast; in return, Strongbow was permitted to retain his other acquisitions in Ireland, and was restored to the possession of his estates in Wales.

MacMurrogh having died previously to this interview, Strongbow had assumed the title of King of Leinster, in right of his wife Eva; and he now found himself reduced from the condition of a sovereign prince to that of steward of the English crown. In the year 1171, Henry set sail from Milford to take possession of his new territories. The royal force consisted of 400 vessels, containing about 5,000 men, among whom were 500 knights. Henry landed at the Crook, near Waterford, October 18th, and was received by the Norman chiefs, who tendered him their homage. The army commenced its march, by way of Cashel, to Dublin, meeting with no resistance. The inhabitants, overawed by the numbers and the martial equipment of their enemies, fled in dismay before the advancing troops, and the native kings of the south had no other alternative than to surrender at the summons of the conqueror, and offer their allegiance to him.

Having established his court at Dublin, Henry styled himself King of all Hibernia, and summoned the whole of the Irish chiefs to his presence. Many obeyed; but the Kings of Connaught and Ulster, entrenched in their native mountains, refused to acknowledge his authority, and the sovereignty of Henry was limited by a line drawn across the island, from the mouth of the Shannon to that of the Boyne. All the pomp which distinguished the Plantagenet court was displayed in Dublin, and the Irish people—lively, impressible, and fond of novelty—derived pleasure from contemplating the splendid appearance of the Norman arms, horses, and accoutrements of war. The majority of the clergy also gave their support to the invader, and welcomed him as one bearing the authority of the Church. Henry promulgated the bull of Pope Adrian; and various reforms and observances of canonical discipline were introduced into the Irish Church.

Henry's former haughtiness towards the clergy, and his resistance to the encroachments of the papal see upon the rights of the crown, had now disappeared. Not only did he require the support of the bishops to secure his new conquest, but the popular feeling excited throughout his dominions by the death of Becket rendered it necessary for him to conciliate where he had formerly threatened. This course of action met with temporary success, and Pope Alexander III. issued a bull confirming that of his predecessor, Adrian, and ratifying the king's title to the possession of Ireland.

After he had remained in the country for a few months longer, Henry received news which compelled his immediate return to England. Having appointed officers to the chief places of power in the island, he sailed from Wexford on the 17th of April, 1172, and landed at Portfinnan, in Wales.

At this time the king had four legitimate sons living—Henry, Richard, Geoffrey, and John, of whom Henry, the eldest, was eighteen years of age. Equitable provision had been made for each of them, it being intended that Henry should succeed to the English throne, as well as to the territories of Normandy, Anjou, and Maine. Richard, who was the favourite of his mother, was to receive her estates of Aquitaine and Poitou; Geoffrey, who had married the daughter of the Duke of Brittany, was to succeed to that province; and John was to be made King of Ireland. During the archbishopric of Thomas Becket, the king had taken measures to show his authority by causing his eldest son to be crowned king by the Archbishop of York. The political enemies of Henry exerted themselves to turn this impolitic measure to their own advantage, by exciting the son to rebellion against the father, who was now called the elder king. In these attempts they were seconded by Queen Eleanor, whose affections had been alienated from the king by his numerous infidelities. She was a woman of strong passions, and determined to make her children the instruments of her vengeance. Through her efforts the people of Aquitaine and Poitou attached themselves to the cause of the younger king, and many of the nobles of those provinces became his counsellors and confidants. They spared no pains to excite the ambition of the youth, and persuade him that his father had abdicated the throne in his favour, and was no longer entitled to hold the sovereign authority. At the coronation of Prince Henry, his wife Margaret, the daughter of Louis of France, was not permitted to receive the crown with her husband, and this omission was resented by the French king, to whom it afforded a pretext for embracing the cause of his son-in-law. A peace having been concluded by the intervention of the Pope, the wrong was repaired, and Margaret was crowned queen. Henry then permitted the young couple to visit the French court, and during their stay, Louis continued to foment the dissatisfaction of the son, and to excite him to rebellion against his father.

On his return to England, the younger king did not hesitate to demand that his father should resign to him either the throne of England or one of the two duchies of Normandy and Anjou. Henry advised him to have patience until the time when all these possessions would become his. The son quitted his father's presence in anger, and from that day, in the language of an old historian, no word of peace ever more passed between them.

In 1174 young Henry sought refuge with Louis VII. at St. Denis. On the news of this escape being brought to the old king, he displayed all the energy of former years, and, mounting on horseback, he proceeded along the frontier of Normandy, inspecting the defences, and preparing against attacks. Messengers, with a similar object, were also dispatched to the captains of the royal garrisons in Anjou, Aquitaine, and Brittany. Meanwhile the two princes, Richard and Geoffrey, followed their brother to the French court. Henry now sent envoys to the French court, demanding his son, and also requiring to know the intentions of the King of France. The ambassadors were received in full court, in the presence of young Henry and his brothers. When, according to the usual form, they commenced their message by enumerating the titles of their royal master, they were interrupted by Louis, who declared that there was but one King of England—namely, the young prince now standing before them.

Young Henry was recognised by a general assembly of the barons and bishops of France as having the only lawful right to the English throne. Louis VII. made oath to this effect, and after him the brothers of Henry and the barons of the kingdom. A great seal was made with the arms of the King of England, in order that Henry might affix that sign of royalty to his documents of state.

His first acts were grants of land and estates to the barons of France and the enemies of his father who were willing to join the confederacy. Among these were William, King of Scotland, who was to receive the territories of Northumberland and Cumberland, conquered by his predecessors; Philip, Count of Flanders, to whom was promised the earldom of Kent, and the castles of Dover and Rochester; and the Count of Blois, who was to have Amboise, Château-Renault, and five hundred pounds of silver from the revenues of Anjou. Other donations were made of a similar kind, and the young king sent messengers to Rome to obtain the sanction of the Pope. Meanwhile the cause of the rebellious son was embraced by many powerful chiefs, even among the vassals of the English king. Not a few recalled former acts of arrogance or oppression for which the present occasion offered the prospect of vengeance; others, who were young in arms, and of turbulent and adventurous spirit, were easily induced to take up arms in favour of the gay young prince. In England the Earls of Leicester and Chester were the principal supporters of his cause.

Henry, who was then in Normandy, found himself deserted by many of the lords of his court, and it is said that even the guards of his chamber, those who were entrusted with the care of his person and his life, went over to his enemies. In circumstances such as these, with dangers and anxieties thickening around him, the indomitable character and powerful mind of the king—now in his prime—were displayed to their full extent. He possessed in a high degree those political and military talents which were hereditary in the family of the Conqueror, and although the loss of his followers was to him a cause of the greatest grief and despair, yet he preserved a calm and cheerful countenance and an admirable temper, pursuing his usual amusements of hunting and hawking, and showing himself more than usually gay and affable towards those who came into his presence.

Allusion has already been made to the animosities existing between the different races inhabiting the Continental territories of Henry II. The rebellion of the princes fomented this national hatred, and opposing nations took part in the contest, and having once drawn the sword, were not easily induced to lay it aside. While the

King of France and Henry the younger were marching an army into Normandy, Richard had gone to Poitou, where most of the barons entered the field in his cause. Geoffrey met with similar success among the people of Brittany, who, with their former readiness for revolt, entered into a confederation for the purpose of securing their own interests, while ostensibly supporting the cause of their duke. The old king thus found himself attacked at several points simultaneously, while the troops whom he had at command were chiefly the Brabançon mercenaries, who, though valiant men-at-arms, were in fact little better than banditti. With a division of these troops Henry opposed the advance of the King of France, and ultimately compelled him to make a rapid retreat. Another division, which had been sent into Brittany, met with equal success against the insurgents, and the adherents of the princes were defeated wherever they showed themselves. King Louis, who possessed little persistence of character, soon grew weary of this war, as he had done on former occasions, and advised the rebellious sons to seek a reconciliation with their father. Henry consented to a conference, and the two kings met in a wide plain near to Gisors, where there was a venerable elm, whose branches descended to the ground. In this spot from time immemorial all conferences had been held between the dukes of Normandy and the kings of France. It had, however, no result; and a desultory war, in which no engagement of importance took place, was continued during the rest of the year.

The Scots, who had begun to make forays upon the lands in their neighbourhood, were now assuming a dangerous attitude; but were repulsed by Richard de Lucy, the king's high justiciary, who burnt their town of Berwick, and drove them back with considerable slaughter. On his return to the south De Lucy defeated the Earl of Leicester, and took him prisoner. The peasantry of England appear to have been indifferent to these disputes, and, therefore, remained quiet. The people of Normandy, also, were generally faithful to their sovereign, and it was among the recent conquests of Henry—in the provinces of Poitou and Aquitaine, Maine and Anjou—that the rebellion gained ground. Two of the natural sons of the king, who were at that time in England, exerted themselves strenuously in the cause of their father, and one of these—Geoffrey, Bishop of Lincoln—distinguished himself by various successes against the insurgent barons.

Meanwhile, Richard, having fortified a number of castles of Poitou and Aquitaine, headed a general insurrection of the people of those provinces. Against him, in the year 1174, the king marched his Brabançon troops, having placed garrisons in Normandy to repel the attacks of the King of France. Henry took possession of the town of Saintes, and also of the fortress of Taillebourg, and in his return from Anjou, devastated the frontier of Poitou, destroying the growing crops as well as the dwellings of the people. On his arrival in Normandy he received news that his eldest son, with Philip, Count of Flanders, had prepared a great armament with which they were about to make a descent upon the English coast. The king, whose movements on such occasions were unsurpassed for rapidity and energy, immediately took horse, and proceeded to the nearest seaport. A storm was raging as he reached the coast, but Henry immediately embarked; carrying with him as prisoners his wife Eleanor, and Margaret, the wife of his eldest son, who had not succeeded in following her husband to the court of her father.

Henry landed at Southampton, whence he proceeded to Canterbury, for the purpose of undergoing that extraordinary penance, to which some allusion has already been made. It is related that he rode all night without resting by the way, and that when, at the dawn of day, he came in sight of Canterbury cathedral, he immediately dismounted from his horse, threw from him his shoes and royal robes, and walked the rest of the way barefoot, along a stony road. On arriving at the cathedral, the king, accompanied by a great number of bishops, abbots, and monks, including all those of Canterbury, descended to the crypt, in which the corpse of Thomas Becket was laid. He knelt upon the stone of the tomb, and, stripping off part of his clothes, exposed his back to the scourge. Each of the bishops then took one of the whips with several lashes, used in the monasteries for penance, and each, in turn, struck the king several times on the shoulders, saying, "As Christ was scourged for our sins, so be thou for thine own." The scourging did not end the acts of humiliation. Henry remained a day and a night prostrate before the tomb, during which time he took no food, and did not quit the place. The fatigue which he thus underwent brought on a fever, which confined him during several days to his chamber. The display of repentance, whether real or assumed, produced a reaction in the king's favour among the people, and he at once recovered the popularity he had lost. It happened that on the day when Henry was thus humbling himself before the tomb of Becket, one of his most powerful enemies had been taken prisoner. William the Lion, of Scotland, had made a hostile incursion into the lands of the English; and on the 12th of July, when he was amusing himself by tilting in a meadow with some of his nobles, he was surprised by Ranulph de Glanville, and captured, together with those who were with him. The English people, deeply imbued with the superstition of the time, attributed this success to the favour of the martyred archbishop, and they flocked to the standard of the king. Henry was not long in recovering his strength; and, taking the field once more, he advanced against the rebellious barons, who gave way and fled at the sound of his approach. Many of their castles were carried by storm, and many were surprised before the inmates had time to escape. So many prisoners were taken that, according to Giraldus Cambrensis, there were hardly cords enough to bind them, or prisons enough to hold them.

Having effectually repressed the revolt in England, Henry passed over with his army into Normandy. The inhabitants of Poitou and Brittany rose again in rebellion. Meanwhile the Count of Flanders had resigned his project of invading England as soon as Henry's return thither, and the various successes which attended him, were made known. The earl turned his forces in another direction, and having been joined by Henry, the younger king, and by Louis of France, laid siege to the city of Rouen. The attacking forces had scarcely sat down before the place, when Henry, who had returned in haste to the Continent, appeared on the scene of action, and obtained possession of the stores of the French army. Louis and his allies made but a brief resistance, and in a few days raised the siege. Their numerous army retreated hastily before the forces of the English king, who pursued his advantage, and compelled his adversaries once more to come

HENRY ON HIS WAY TO BECKET'S TOMB. *(See p. 204.)*

to terms. Louis was again the first to withdraw from the contest, and proposed a conference for arranging terms of peace, to which the princes Henry and Geoffrey reluctantly assented.

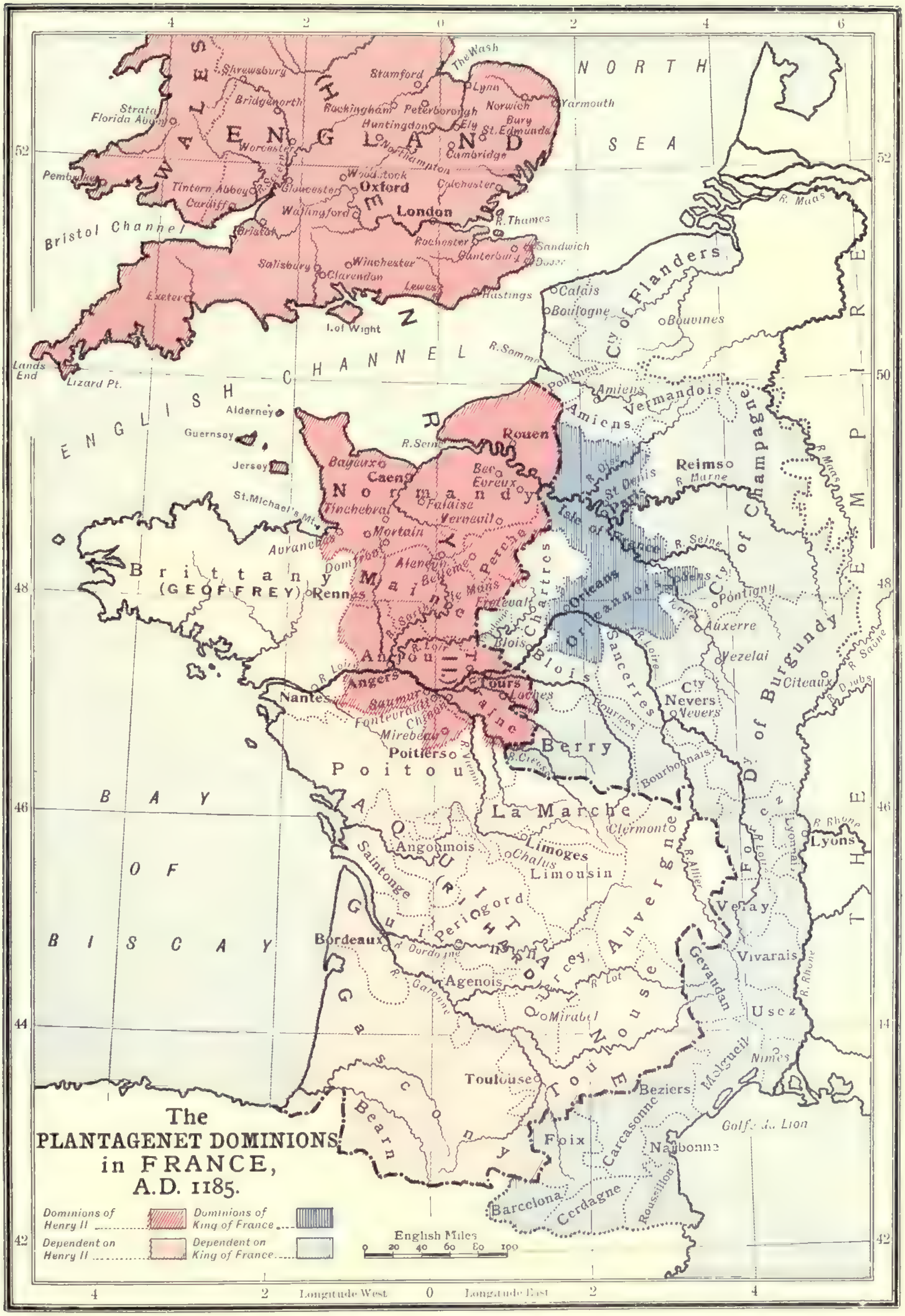
Richard at first refused to be included in the truce, but receiving no succour from his allies, he was unable to maintain a defence, and after the loss of many fortresses, he was compelled to return to his father, and implore his pardon. The king, stern and unrelenting towards ordinary offenders, acted with remarkable indulgence towards his rebellious children. An act of reconciliation was agreed upon, by which estates and revenues were assigned to each of the princes; and Henry made peace with the French king and the Count of Flanders, on condition that they restored the territories which they had occupied since the commencement of the war. On the other hand, Henry agreed to give up those lands which he had conquered, and to liberate all his prisoners, with the exception of the King of Scotland, who had been confined in the castle of Falaise. In the following month of December (1174), the Scottish king obtained his freedom by doing homage to Henry, and acknowledging himself as his vassal—thus sacrificing nominally the independence of his kingdom.

The three princes assented to the terms offered by their father, and promised future honour and obedience to him, the two younger taking the oath of fealty. In 1175 Henry returned to England with his eldest son, and the reconciliation between them was now so complete, that it is related that they ate at the same table and slept in the same bed.

At length the country enjoyed a short period of tranquillity, and eight years elapsed, during which there was peace at home and abroad, and the energies of the king were engaged in promoting reforms in the internal government of the kingdom. His reputation for wisdom and power at this time stood so high that the Kings of Navarre and Castile, who had been engaged in a prolonged warfare upon a question of territory, agreed to refer their dispute to the decision of the English monarch, and it is related that he delivered a wise and impartial judgment between them.

In 1182 fresh disputes arose between Henry and his sons. Richard having been called upon to do homage to his elder brother Henry for the provinces of Aquitaine and Poitou, positively refused, and immediately proceeded to put his fortresses in a condition of defence. In the beginning of the following year, Henry the younger and Geoffrey marched an army, part of which was composed of the Brabançon troops, against their brother, and several furious engagements took place between them. The king, alarmed at the grave appearance of the quarrel, recalled his two sons, and on their refusal took up arms in support of Richard. The family war was thus renewed under a new aspect, one of the sons fighting with his father against his two brothers. Contemporary historians speak with a fitting horror of these unnatural contests, and attribute their recurrence to an evil destiny which hung over the race of Plantagenet, as the result of some great crime which remained unexpiated. Revolting stories were related of the origin of the family, and of the deeds of its descendants—stories, of which some are evidently fabulous, and others, probably, had little or no foundation in fact. One of these, which occurs in the chronicles of Johannes Brompton, may be given as an instance:—An ancient countess of Anjou, from whom King Henry was descended, was observed by her husband to evince great reluctance to entering a church, and when she did visit one, she invariably quitted the edifice before the celebration of the sacrament. The husband, whose suspicions were excited, caused her one day to be forcibly detained by four esquires; but, at the moment of the consecration, the countess threw off the cloak by which she was held, flew out of the church window, and was never seen afterwards. It is related that Prince Richard was accustomed to refer to this anecdote, and to say it was no matter of surprise that he and his family, who had sprung from such a stock, should be on bad terms with each other.

Henry and his son Richard marched against Limoges, which was in the possession of Henry the younger and Geoffrey. Within a few weeks the eldest brother deserted the cause of the men of Aquitaine, and gave in his submission once more to his father. Geoffrey, however, remained firm, and, supported by the people, continued his opposition. Prince Henry communicated with his brother through Bertrand de Born, and arranged that a meeting should take place between his father and Geoffrey, for the purpose of arranging terms of peace. When the king arrived at Limoges to attend this conference, he was surprised to find the gates of the town shut against him; and on presenting himself with a small escort before the walls, and demanding



The PLANTAGENET DOMINIONS in FRANCE, A.D. 1185.

admittance, he was answered by a flight of arrows, one of which pierced his armour. An explanation ensued, when this occurrence was declared to be a mistake, and the king entered the town, and was met by Geoffrey in an open place, where they began the conference. During the interview a second flight of arrows was discharged from the walls of the castle adjoining, one of which struck the king's horse on the head. Henry ordered one of his esquires to pick up the arrow, and, taking it in his hand, he presented it to Geoffrey, with words of sorrow and reproach.

Henry the younger, finding his attempts at mediation frustrated, declared that the men of Aquitaine were obstinate rebels, with whom he would never more make peace or truce, but that he would remain true to his father at all times. And yet a month had scarcely elapsed before he again quitted his father, and entered into a league with his adversaries. The Pope now interposed, and by his command the Norman clergy excommunicated the disobedient son—a penalty which the perjuries of the prince had once before called down upon him. It seems improbable that Henry the younger was in the least disturbed by being under the ban of the Church; but he was induced by some cause to return to his father, who received him once more with forgiveness. The prince promised, in the name of the insurgents, to surrender the town of Limoges; but if he had their warranty for doing so, they soon repented of their determination. The envoys of the king, who were sent to take possession of the town, were butchered within the walls, and the people, whose national spirit was thoroughly aroused, showed themselves resolved to put down all measures of reconciliation.

Not long after these events, Henry received a message that his son, having fallen dangerously ill at Château-Martel, near Limoges, was anxious to see him. The king, who remembered the former dastardly attempts upon his own life, as well as the recent assassination of his soldiers, feared to trust himself again among these conspirators. He took a ring from his finger, and giving it to the Archbishop of Bordeaux, desired him to convey it immediately to the prince, with the assurance of his father's love. The archbishop executed his mission, and Prince Henry died with his father's ring pressed to his lips, confessing his undutiful conduct, and showing every sign of contrition. The younger king was twenty-seven years of age at the time of his death, which took place on the 11th of June, 1183.

The death of the younger king caused a reconciliation between the several members of this dissevered family. Even the Queen Eleanor was once more taken for a while into favour; and in her presence, the Princes Geoffrey and Richard, as well as their younger brother, Prince John. swore to a solemn bond of final peace and concord (1184). The king, distrusting the untamed disposition of his elder sons, appears to have extended his chief favour and affection towards John. In a few months more the peace of the family was again disturbed by Geoffrey, who demanded the earldom of Anjou, and, on being refused, he went over to the French court. Here he passed his time in amusement and dissipation, waiting an opportunity for pursuing his schemes of ambition. One day, when engaged in a tournament, his horse was thrown down, and the prince himself was trampled to death by the horses of the combatants (1186).

Six years before the death of Geoffrey, Louis VII. of France had died, and the throne became occupied by his son, Philip II., a young and warlike prince. He it was who had welcomed Geoffrey to the French court, and who now invited his brother Richard to enjoy the same honours. The invitation was accepted, and a great friendship—which, however, was not destined to endure in after years—sprang up between the two princes. This state of things displeased Henry, who sent repeated messages to his son, desiring him to return to England. After various excuses and delays, Richard set out, apparently for that purpose; but on reaching Chinon, where one of the royal treasuries was placed, he carried off the contents by force. The money thus obtained was spent in fortifying castles in Aquitaine, whither he immediately proceeded. The people of that province, disgusted with the result of their previous rebellion, offered him no support, and after a short time he was compelled to return to his father. Henry, who had learnt to distrust the efficacy of the most solemn oaths, collected a great assembly of the clergy and the barons to bear witness to his son's new vows of good faith and duty.

In the following year (1187) the state of affairs in the Holy Land again attracted the attention of the princes of the west. Jerusalem, with its sacred treasures and relics, had again fallen into the hands of the Mahometans, who were headed by a young and warlike prince, Saleh-ed-Deen, commonly called Saladin. The Christian conquerors of the Holy Land were suffering repeated defeats and misfortunes, and the Pope sent messages to the princes of Europe, calling upon them to arouse themselves, and take up arms in the cause of the Cross. Henry of England at once responded to the call, and Philip having determined on a similar course of action, a conference was determined upon between the two kings for the purpose of arranging a permanent peace. The meeting took place, as before, in the field beside the elm-tree between Trie and Gisors. Several envoys of the Pope were present, among whom was the celebrated William, Archbishop of Tyre. The eloquence of this man is said to have tended greatly to the success of the negotiations. Suspending the settlement of their differences, the two kings swore to take up arms as brothers in the holy cause, and, in token of their pledge, each received from the archbishop a cross, which he attached to his dress, the cross of the King of England being white, and that of the King of France red.

Having held a council at Le Mans to deliberate upon the measures to be pursued for taking the field, Henry returned to England; and a similar council, composed of the barons of the whole kingdom, was held at Geddington, in Northamptonshire. The lords determined that a tenth of all property in the kingdom should be levied to meet the expenses of the crusade; the tax was known as the Saladin tithe. The men of landed property who accompanied the royal army were to receive the sum levied on their lands, to enable them to take the field, the impost upon the other parts of the country being applied to the use of the Crown. The sum of £70,000, which was raised by this means, proving insufficient, Henry extorted large sums of money from the Jews, and the people of that unhappy race were compelled, by imprisonment and other severe measures, to yield up their hoards. One-fourth of their whole property was thus extorted from the Jews, and probably, in many cases, a much larger sum.

Notwithstanding all these preparations, and the solemn oath of the two kings, the money thus obtained was not applied to the conquest of Jerusalem. A quarrel took place between Prince Richard and Raymond of Toulouse, and the people of Aquitaine, once more roused to rebellion, profited by the dispute to form new leagues against the Plantagenet government. The King of France joined the insurgents, and attacked various castles and towns in the occupation of Henry. At length, after a profitless contest of several months, the two kings met once more under the old elm-tree, resolved to arrange a peace. No mockery of solemn engagements took place on this occasion, and Henry and Philip separated in anger, without having been able to come to an agreement. The young King of France, enraged at the failure of the conference, cut down the elm-tree, swearing by the saints that never more should a parley be held under it.

This latter revolt, on the part of Richard, however unjustifiable it might be, was not without some pretext. According to an agreement, made in former years, between Henry II. and Louis VII., it had been determined that Richard should marry Alice, King Louis's daughter, and the young princess was placed in the hands of Henry, until she should arrive at a marriageable age. The war, having broken out afresh, and the princes of England being separated from their father, the marriage was deferred, and it was currently reported that Henry had grown enamoured of her, and even that she had become his mistress. It is related that, at the time when his sons were at war against him, the king had determined to make Alice his wife, and that an attempt which he made to procure a divorce from the Queen Eleanor was to be attributed to this partiality. The court of Rome, however, rejected his entreaties and presents, and refused the application.

What degree of truth may have existed in these reports cannot now be determined, but it is certain that Henry detained the princess for a number of years, resisting the demands of Philip, and even the order of the Pope, that the marriage between her and Richard should take place. Another plea urged by Richard in justification of his rebellion, was his belief that his brother John was intended to succeed to the English throne. No circumstances, however, are related by the historians giving reasonable grounds for such an opinion. In November, 1188, another conference took place, and this time at Bonmoulins, in Normandy. Philip demanded that his sister should be immediately delivered up to her affianced husband, and that Richard should be declared heir to the English throne in the presence of all the barons of the two countries. Henry, remembering the events which had followed the recognition of the claims of his eldest son, refused to repeat an act which might be attended with similar disturbances. Richard, enraged at this refusal, turned from his father, and placing his hands in those of the King of France, declared himself his vassal, and said that he committed the protection of his hereditary rights into his hands. Philip accepted his oath of fealty, and, in return, presented him with some towns conquered by the French troops from his father. Henry quitted the spot in violent agitation, and, mounting his horse, he rode to Saumur, there to make his preparations for continuing the war.

At the news of this fresh rupture, the Bretons, who had been quiet for two years, rose once more in revolt, and the men of Poitou declared for Richard so soon as they perceived him to be finally separated from his father. Many of the nobles and knights of Henry began to desert him, as they had done before, and the party of his son, supported by the King of France, increased in strength daily. On the other hand, the greater part of the Normans remained faithful to their sovereign, and the Pope granted Henry his assistance, causing sentence of excommunication to be declared against all the adherents of the rebellious son. But Henry was no longer young. The repeated vexations and misfortunes he had undergone—the wounds he had received from the disobedience of his children—at length produced their effect, and he resigned himself to sorrow, leaving to the legate of the Pope and to the priests the care of his defence.

The French king attacked his territories in Anjou, while the Poitevins and Bretons, headed by Richard, seized the royal towns and castles in the south. The old king, whom grief and failing health had reft of all his former energy, was compelled once more to sue for peace, and offered to grant whatever terms might be demanded. Philip and Henry met, for the last time, on the plain of Colombières, Richard remaining at a distance, waiting the result of the interview. Philip demanded that the English king should give in his allegiance to him, and place himself at his mercy; that Alice should be committed to the care of persons appointed by Richard, until his return from the Holy Land, whither he intended to proceed immediately; that Henry should give his son the kiss of peace, in token of entire forgiveness of the past, and should pay to the King

HENRY RECEIVING THE NEWS OF JOHN'S TREACHERY. (*See p.* 210.)

of France twenty thousand marks of silver, for the restitution of the provinces which he had conquered.

According to Roger of Hoveden, a contemporary historian, the two kings were talking in the open field, when suddenly, although the sky was without a cloud, a loud clap of thunder was heard, and a flash of lightning descended between them. They immediately separated in affright, and when, after a short interval, they met again, a second clap, louder than the first, was heard almost on the instant. The conference was broken off, and Henry, whose weak state of health rendered him liable to be seriously affected by any violent emotion, retired to his quarters, where the articles of the treaty, reduced to writing, were sent to him. Thus the historian would have us believe that Heaven itself interposed to prevent the dishonour of the English king, and his submission to the crown of France.

The envoys of Philip found the old king in bed, and while he lay there they began to read out to him the articles of the treaty. When they came to the part which referred to the persons engaged secretly or avowedly in the cause of Richard, the king desired to know their names, that he might at least learn who they were who had been his enemies. The first name read to him was that of his youngest son, John, whom he had so long believed to be loyal and dutiful. On hearing this name, the old man was seized with a violent agitation or convulsion of the whole frame. Raising himself half up, he exclaimed, "Is it, then, true that John, the joy of my heart, the son of my love, he whom I have cherished more than all the rest, and for love of whom I have brought upon myself these troubles, has also deserted me?" Then falling back on the bed, and turning his face to the wall, he said, in words of despair, "So be it, then; let everything go as it will. I care no more for myself, nor for the world!"

Feeling that he grew rapidly worse, Henry caused himself to be conveyed to Chinon, where he arrived in a dying state. In his last moments he was heard to utter maledictions on himself as a conquered king, and to curse also the sons he was leaving behind him. The bishops and lords who surrounded him exerted themselves in vain to induce him to retract these words, and he continued repeating them until death laid its finger on his lips (July 6, 1189).

No sooner had this great king breathed his last, than his servants and attendants, one and all, deserted his corpse, as had happened a century before to his ancestor, William the Conqueror. It is related that these hirelings stripped the body of their royal master of the very clothes which covered him, and carried off everything of value from the chamber. King Henry had desired to be buried at the abbey of Fontevrault, a few leagues to the south of Chinon; but it was not until after considerable delay that people could be found to wrap the body in a shroud, and convey it thither with horses. The corpse was lying in the great church of the abbey, waiting the time of sepulture, when Richard, who had received the news of his father's death, arrived at Fontevrault. Entering the church, he commanded the face of the dead king to be uncovered, that he might look upon it for the last time. The features were still contracted, and bore upon them the impress of prolonged agony. The son gazed upon the sight in silence, and with a sudden impulse, he knelt down for a few moments before the altar; then, rising up, he quitted the church, not to return. An old superstition of the North, which had descended alike to Normans and Saxons, was to the effect that the body of a murdered man would bleed in the presence of the murderer; and some of the chronicles relate that from the moment when Richard entered the church, until he had again passed the threshold, blood flowed without ceasing from the nostrils of the dead king. Thus it is evident that contemporary writers regarded the conduct of the sons as having accelerated, if indeed it did not cause, the death of their father.

Henry II. died on the 6th of July, 1189, at the age of fifty-six, having reigned nearly thirty-five years. Of the king's personal character, very different estimates have been formed by different historians. Those who look at a many-sided character from their own narrow standpoint, will, necessarily, paint that side only which is presented to them, leaving the rest in shadow; and thus we find Henry II. described on the one hand as a man almost without blemish, and, on the other, as utterly destitute of public or private virtue. It appears probable that he had little abstract regard for the welfare of the people, but he was fully alive to his own interests, and he perceived those interests to be bound up in the national prosperity. He therefore laboured to promote the well-being of his subjects, as absolute monarchs, in later times, have done from a similar motive. He was inordinately ambitious, and was heard to say, in moments of triumph, that the whole world was a portion little enough for a great man. He was skilled in the arts of diplomacy, and accustomed to use dissimulation and falsehood whenever an advantage was to be gained thereby.

Instances have been given of the ungovernable fits of passion to which Henry in his younger days was subject; these appear to have been much less frequent as he grew past middle age. Without any self-control in moments of anger, he was at other times remarkable for acting with calm judgment and calculation. In his relations with women he was extremely licentious. Among his mistresses was one who has been celebrated in various romantic tales, most of which are without any foundation in truth. "Fair Rosamond" was the daughter of Walter Clifford, a baron of Herefordshire, whose castle was situated on one of the heights overlooking the valley of the Wye, between the Welsh Hay and Hereford. Henry fell in love with her before he ascended the throne, and she bore to him two sons, who have been already mentioned as aiding their father at the time of the partial rebellion in England. One of these was William, called Longsword, from the size of the weapon which he carried, who married the daughter of the Earl of Salisbury, and succeeded to his estates; the other was Geoffrey, Bishop of Lincoln, and subsequently Archbishop of York. While Henry was still a young man, Rosamond retired to the convent of Godstow, near to Oxford, where, after a few years, she died. During her residence there, Henry bestowed many valuable presents upon the convent for her sake, and the nuns, who seem to have been actuated by a personal regard for her, as well as by a recollection of the benefits she had conferred upon them, buried her in their choir, burning tapers round her tomb, and showing to her remains other marks of honour. Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, twenty years afterwards, gave the nuns to understand that one who had led an impure life, even though the mistress of a king, was not worthy to lie in the sacred edifice. The repentance of Rosamond, which appears to have been sincere, was not permitted to wipe away the shame of the past, and her body was removed and buried in the common cemetery. The nuns, however, feared no contamination from the poor remains of their frail sister, and they secretly collected her bones, strewed perfumes over them, and buried them once more in the church. The story of the bower of Rosamond, and of the poisoned bowl forced upon her by the jealousy of Eleanor, cannot be traced to any contemporary source, and must be rejected as devoid of truth.

Whatever may be the view we take of the character of Henry as a man, there can be no doubt that, as a king, he deserves a high place in English history. In the stormy times of the Middle Ages, better were the wrongs inflicted by an ambitious monarch, than the national corruption and decay which attended the reign of a weak one. Under the rule of Henry Plantagenet, the country made rapid strides in power and influence, and reached that high position among the nations of Europe which it was destined to maintain in later times.

CROWN OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY

(*From the Tomb of Richard I. at Fontevrault.*)

ST. CLEMENT'S, SANDWICH, SHOWING THE NORMAN TOWER.

CHAPTER XX.

NORMAN ARCHITECTURE.

Introduction of Norman Architecture—Remains of Saxon Work—Canterbury Cathedral—St. Albans and other Edifices—Periods of Norman Architecture—Its Characteristics—Towers—Windows—Doorways—Porches—Arches—Piers and Pillars—Capitals—Mouldings and Ornaments.

Edward the Confessor, who was more Norman than English, and more a churchman than a king, had been brought up at the Norman court, where his ideas and tastes had been formed. On his accession to the English throne he introduced the Norman fashions and manners, filled his court with Norman ecclesiastics, and adopted the Norman style of architecture for his ecclesiastical buildings. Shortly before his death he built the abbey church of Westminster, which is described by William of Malmesbury* as being constructed in a "new style," and he also says that it served for a model for many subsequent buildings. This edifice, which has long since disappeared, was doubtless in the style he had imported from abroad, and, though built by an English monarch, was, there can be no doubt, a genuine Norman building. Numerous churches and monasteries, founded on this model, are said to have sprung up in towns and villages in all directions, and thus we see that the Norman style was established even before the Norman conquest. That great event confirmed the changes which the Confessor had begun, and the rude English churches were swept away and replaced by the more finished Norman edifices.

The Normans were essentially a building people, and no building seems to have been good enough for them, if they had the means of erecting a better. Hence we see a continued change—a constant pulling down and rebuilding on a larger scale, and to this must be ascribed the disappearance of the buildings which had been erected before the Conquest. It is chiefly in remote places, which were too poor to enlarge their churches, that we still find remains of the original Saxon work. In many of the smaller churches, which were erected soon after the Conquest, the Saxon ideas still linger; the towers have the same proportions, and the same general appearance prevails, but the workmanship is better; the baluster disappears, and is replaced by a shaft, and the capitals assume more of the Norman form. This lingering love for the old form was, doubtless, owing to the necessary employment of Saxon workmen, who naturally still clung to their national style; but in large buildings, where foreign architects and workmen would be employed, the new style would be exhibited in its purity.

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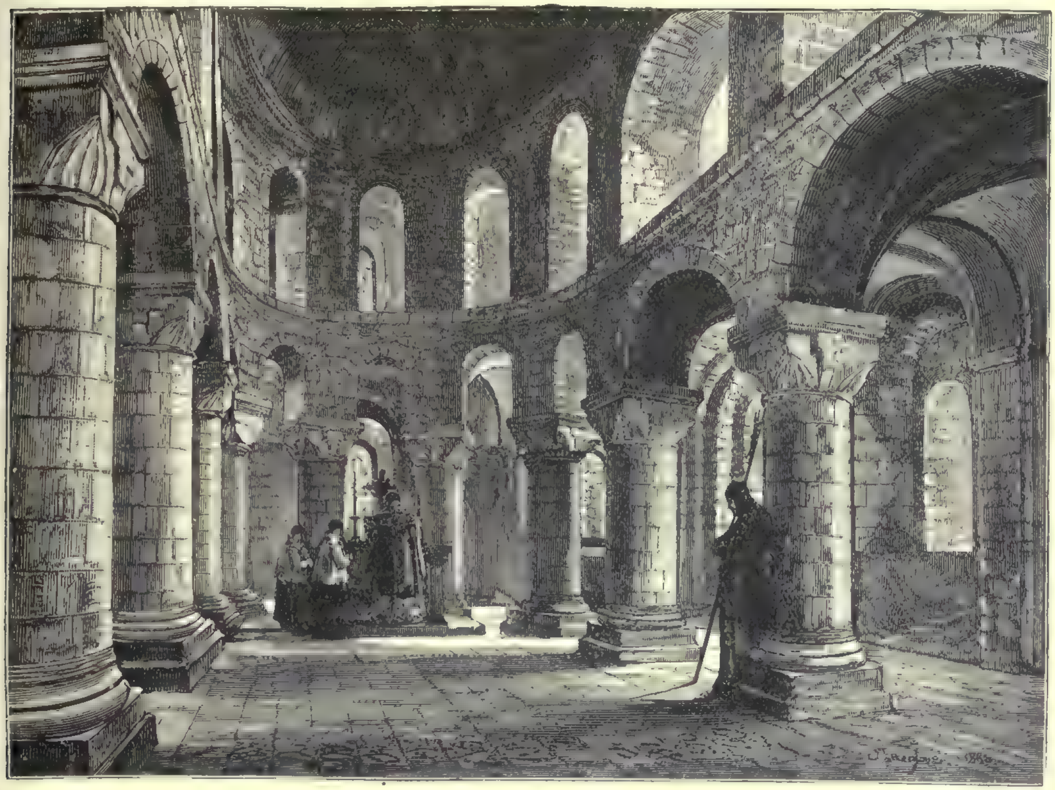
* His words are: "King Edward the Confessor commanded the church at Westminster to be dedicated on Innocents' Day. He was buried on the day of the Epiphany, in the said church, which he first in England had erected after that kind of style, which almost all attempt to rival, at enormous expense."

Canterbury, St. Albans, Rochester, and Ely were built in the reign of the Conqueror, but of these Canterbury is the most interesting, as it so fully illustrates the history of architecture in this kingdom. There was a Saxon cathedral on the spot at the time of the Conquest, but having been destroyed by fire, it was rebuilt on an enlarged scale by the Norman archbishop, Lanfranc, in 1070; but, within about twenty years, this church was pulled down by his successor, as not being large enough, and another erected on a more magnificent scale. This was again partially destroyed by fire, and was again rebuilt in 1175 and the following years. The history of the fire, and the subsequent rebuilding, has been minutely given by Gervase, a monk of Canterbury, who was an eye-witness of the whole; and his account is peculiarly valuable, as it enables us to compare the style of the remains of the old building with that erected under his own eyes; and we are by this means enabled to point out the differences between the early and the late Norman buildings. His narrative is clear and interesting, and his description of the present building wonderfully correct.


THE CHAPEL IN THE WHITE TOWER, TOWER OF LONDON.

St. Albans Abbey was built in the reign of the Conqueror, and in the construction of the building the materials of the Roman city of Verulam were freely used; so that a great part of it is built of Roman bricks.

The following cathedrals also were built in the Norman period, and still retain portions of the original work:—Lincoln, Rochester, Ely, Worcester, Gloucester, Durham, Norwich, Winchester, Peterborough, and Oxford. Castles were erected in various parts of the kingdom, to restrain the rebellious people, who could ill brook the tyranny of the Conqueror. Of these the Tower of London is one of the most important, and the chapel in the White Tower is one of the best examples (dated 1081) we possess of early Norman, though, from its situation in a military building, it has less of ornament than might otherwise have been expected. Of Norman castles, the chief parts which remain are the keeps or principal towers, and these have ordinarily one prevailing character. They are square masses, not having much height in proportion to their breadth, and merely relieved at the angles by slightly projecting turrets. The windows are in general comparatively small, and the walls exceedingly thick — sometimes, as at Carlisle, reaching to sixteen feet. Norwich, from its immense size, is an excellent sample of this kind of tower, and Castle Hedingham is another.

Of the houses of this period many yet exist, though not in an entire state; and of these some fine specimens are found in Lincoln,* where they are said to have belonged to the Jews, but whose riches at that time only led to their destruction.

Many rich and magnificent examples of monastic buildings of this date occur in various parts of the kingdom.

Norman architecture may be divided into three periods — namely, Early, Middle, or fully-developed, and Transition; the first extending from the Conquest, or a few years previous, to the end of the reign of Henry I., 1135; the second from the commencement of Stephen to nearly the end of Henry II., 1180; after which date the Transition commences, and the style gradually loses its characteristics until it merges in the succeeding, or Early English style of the thirteenth century. Of the first period, the chapel in the Tower of London has been already mentioned as an example; the second includes most of our rich Norman buildings; and of the third, the Temple Church is a good specimen.

The great characteristics of Norman architecture are solidity and strength. Walls of an enormous thickness, huge masses of masonry for piers, windows comparatively small, and a profusion of peculiar ornament, seem to be essential to the full development of the style; and there is a gloomy magnificence in a fine Norman building which is highly impressive; its walls seem as firmly fixed in the earth as the iron foot of the Conqueror was on the neck of a prostrate nation.

The distinctive features of Norman architecture may be thus summarised:—

Towers.—These are in general rather low for their breadth. They are more massive than the Saxon ones which preceded them, and this is particularly the case with the later buildings. Many of the church towers which were built soon after the Conquest have very much of the Saxon character remaining, and are proportionally taller than those of later date, but the workmanship is better. A large belfry window, divided by a shaft, in the upper storey, is a common feature; and the surface of the tower is frequently ornamented with stages of intersecting or plain arcades, and sometimes the whole surface is covered with ornament. The angles of the tower are strengthened by flat buttresses having but little projection, which sometimes reach to the top of the building, and sometimes only to the first or second storey. The parapets of most Norman towers are destroyed, and it is consequently difficult to say what they were originally; but it seems probable that the towers terminated in a pointed roof. Staircases were of common occurrence, and are frequently made very ornamental features. St. James's Tower, Bury St. Edmunds, is an example of an early Norman tower, exhibiting the flat, pilaster-like buttresses, so characteristic of Norman work, and secondly, a porch flanked by two pedimented buttresses, ornamented with corbel-tables and intersecting arcades. The arch is plainer than it would have been at a later period, but it shows the billet moulding which is also used on the buttresses. The capitals are of the plain cushion form, and the pediment of the porch exhibits the scalework surface ornament alluded to in p. 216.

Windows.—These are universally round-headed, except in the Transition period. The simplest form is a narrow round-headed opening, with a plain dripstone; but they are frequently wider, and divided into two lights by a shaft, and richly ornamented with the zigzag and other mouldings

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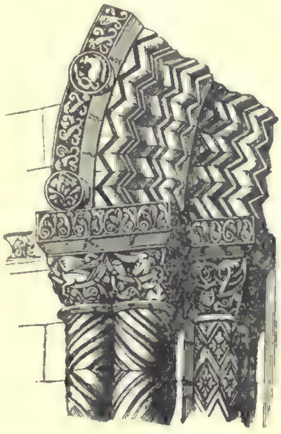
* See Hudson Turner's "Domestic Architecture."

Doorways.—These are the features on which the most elaborate workmanship was bestowed by the Norman architects, and it is perhaps to be attributed to this that so many of them have been preserved; the Norman doorway having frequently been retained when the church was rebuilt. They are always, except in the Transition period, semicircular, and are very deeply moulded. They are frequently three or four times recessed, and are richly ornamented with the peculiar decorations of the style, the most characteristic of which is the zigzag or chevron moulding. A peculiar head, having a bird's beak, and called a "beak-head," is frequently used, and medallions of the signs of the zodiac are not uncommon. The jambs of the door are ornamented with shafts which are sometimes richly adorned, and have elaborately sculptured capitals. The doorway itself is frequently square-headed, and the tympanum or space between this and the arch is filled with sculpture representing the Trinity, the Saviour, saints, or some symbolical design or monstrous animal, and sometimes merely foliage. There are a few doorways which are trefoil-headed instead of circular.


PORTION OF DOORWAY, DURHAM CATHEDRAL.

Porches.—The Norman porch is in general not much more than a doorway, the little projection it has from the wall being intended chiefly to give greater depth to the doorway, which is very deeply recessed, and it is in these porches that we find the richest doorways, the arches and shafts being overlaid with the utmost profusion of ornament, which, though sometimes rude, always produces a fine effect, and there is scarcely any architectural feature which has been so universally admired; other styles may be more chaste and more finished, but there is a grandeur about a rich Norman doorway which is peculiarly its own.

Arches.—The semicircular is the characteristic form of the Norman arch, but there are a few early examples in which the pointed arch was used, supported by massive piers; they are not likely to be mistaken for those of the next style. In the Transition the pointed arch is very frequently used. Sometimes the arch is brought in a little at the impost, when it is called a horse-shoe arch; and sometimes the spring of the arch is above the impost, and is carried down by straight lines. It is then said to be *stilted.*

Piers and Pillars.—The piers in early buildings were very massive, consisting frequently merely of heavy square masses of masonry, with nothing but the impost moulding to relieve their plainness. Sometimes they were recessed at the angles, and sometimes they were circular, with capitals and bases, but still of very large diameter. As the style advanced they were reduced in thickness, and had richly sculptured capitals and bases, frequently ornamented with sculpture at the angles. In the Transition period the pillars become slender and clustered, with little to distinguish them from the next style. The Galilee at Durham is an excellent example of late Norman; the round arch and the zigzag mouldings are still retained, but the pillars are as slender as those of Early English.

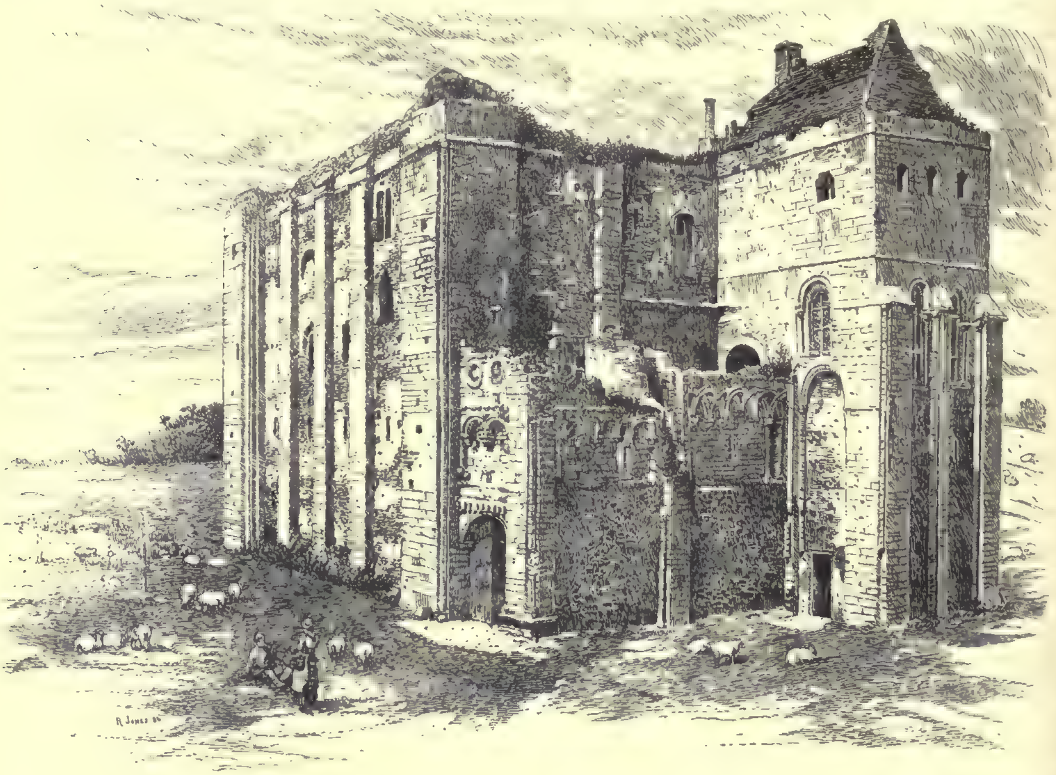
Capitals. — The capital is the member by which the styles are more easily distinguished than by any other. In the Saxon style we have seen that the Corinthian capital was rudely imitated; and we find in the Early Norman this imitation continued, but with more resemblance to the original, and this imitation was more and more complete as the style advanced. The general form of the plain capital is that of a hemisphere cut into four plain faces; this form is called a cushion capital. This may be considered as the fundamental form from which other varieties have been worked. It is sometimes doubled or multiplied, and sometimes highly ornamented. The abacus, or upper member of the capital, will at once distinguish the Norman from all other styles, and throughout Gothic architecture it is the feature most to be depended on in distinguishing one style from another. In the Norman it is square in section, with the corner edge sloped or chamfered off. It is commonly quite plain, but sometimes it is moulded, and sometimes highly ornamented; but in all cases it retains its primitive and distinctive form. The capitals of the Chapel in the Tower of London are excellent examples of Early Norman, showing the volutes at the angles and the plain block in the centre, in room of the caulicoli, and surrounded by a peculiar stiff kind of foliage, the whole being an evident but rude imitation of the Corinthian capital. The volutes and the centre block are common features of Early Norman capitals, but the foliage is rare.

Mouldings and Ornaments.—These are extremely numerous; the ornamented mouldings are almost endless in variety, but the most general is the zigzag, which is used for decoration in all places, both simple and in every variety of combination, sparingly in the early buildings, but profusely in the later ones. The billet is much used in early work, as is also a peculiar kind of shallow lozenge, and other ornaments which required little skill in the execution.

When large and otherwise blank spaces of walls, either on fronts or towers, have to be relieved, it is frequently done by introducing stages of intersecting arcades—a fine example of which occurs at Castle Rising, in Norfolk.

There is a peculiar kind of ornament which is used to relieve surfaces of blank spaces, either over the arches or the interior, or in the heads of window-porches, &c. This is frequently called *diaper work*, and consists either of lines cut in the stone in the form of a trellis, or in imitation of scale-work, arches, &c.

A portion of a doorway from Durham Cathedral is engraved (*see* p. 215) as an example of rich Norman, and exhibits the peculiar mouldings and ornaments of the style. The dripstone shows a rude kind of foliage, on which are placed at intervals medallions containing animals, &c. It is not unusual for these to be occupied with the signs of the zodiac. The arch exhibits a rich series of zigzags; the abacus of the capitals is of the usual Norman form, but has its upright face ornamented with what is an imitation of a classical form, generally known as the Grecian honeysuckle. The capitals are of cushion shape, but overlaid with foliage and monstrous animals. The shapes exhibit two varieties of ornamentation, much used in very rich doorways. The first two are fluted spirally in opposite directions, and the third displays a kind of diaper work, being a modification of the zigzag, in which the interstices are filled with foliage.



CASTLE RISING, NORFOLK. (*After a Photograph by Poulton & Sons.*)

RICHARD I.

CHAPTER XXI.

REIGN OF RICHARD I.: THE THIRD CRUSADE

Richard's Show of Penitence—His Coronation—Massacre of the Jews—Results of the Second Crusade—Richard raises Money for the Third Crusade—The Regency—Departure for the Holy Land—The Sicilian Succession The Quarrel concerning Joan's Dower—Richard's Prodigality—His Interview with the Monk, Joachim—Treachery of Philip, and Richard's Repudiation of Alice—Richard's Betrothal to Berengaria—Adventures on the Coast of Cyprus, and the Conquest of the Island—The Siege of Acre and its Fall—Dissension between Richard and Philip, and Return of the Latter to France—Massacre of Prisoners on Both Sides—The Battle of Azotus—Occupation of Jaffa The Advance towards Jerusalem—Quarrels among the Crusaders, and Negotiations with Saladin—Chivalry of Saladin—Death of Conrad, and Charges brought against Richard—Last Advance upon Jerusalem—Battle of Jaffa—Truce with Saladin.

No sooner had the monks of Fontevrault committed the body of Henry to the grave, than Richard assumed the sovereign authority, and his first acts were marked with all that energy and determination which afterwards distinguished him. He at once gave orders that the person of Stephen of Tours, seneschal of Anjou, and treasurer of Henry, should be seized. This functionary was thrown into a dungeon, where he was confined with irons on his feet and hands, until he had given up to the new king, not only all the treasures of the crown, but also his own property. Richard then called to his councils the advisers of his father, with the exception of Ranulph de Glanville, and discarded those men who had supported his own rebellion, not excepting even his most familiar friends. This policy, which has been attributed by some historians to the repentance of Richard, was more probably the result of profound calculation, and was based upon sound reasoning. The men who were ready to plot against one monarch, would not hesitate to do the same towards another, when occasion served, or offence was given; while those who had supported the reigning dynasty were the men upon whom the new king might most safely depend.

Messengers were immediately sent to England commanding the release of the Queen Eleanor from the confinement into which she had been thrown by Henry. On quitting her prison she was temporarily invested with the office of regent, and during the short period of authority which she thus obtained, she occupied herself in works of mercy and benevolence. The long imprisonment she had undergone appeared to have softened her imperious temper; she listened readily to those who had complaints to lay before her, and pardoned many offenders against the crown. Having proceeded to Winchester, where she took possession of the royal treasures, she summoned a great assembly of the barons and ecclesiastics of the country to receive the new monarch, and tender him their allegiance. After a delay of two months, Richard crossed the channel, accompanied by his brother John, and landed at Portsmouth. On his arrival at Winchester he caused the gold and jewels of the crown to be weighed in his presence, and an inventory made of them. A similar course was pursued in the cities in which treasures of the late king had been deposited. Richard was absorbed in the project of a grand expedition to the Holy Land, which should reduce the infidel to permanent submission, and place himself on the highest pinnacle of military renown. To this circumstance we may in some degree attribute the fact that the ambitious John permitted his brother to succeed to the throne without any attempt to dispute his right. John probably calculated that in the king's absence the actual sovereignty would devolve upon himself, and that the impetuous Richard might never return from the dangers of the holy war. Apart from these considerations, however, it is doubtful whether the weak temper of John would have permitted him to rebel openly against his powerful and energetic brother.

On the 3rd of September, Richard was crowned at Westminster, and the ceremonial was conducted with great pomp and splendour. The procession along the aisles of the cathedral was headed by the Earl of Albemarle, who carried the crown. Over the head of Richard was a silken canopy, supported by four lances, each of which was held by one of the great barons of the kingdom. The Bishops of Bath and Durham walked beside the king, whose path to the altar was spread with a rich carpet of Tyrian purple. The ceremony was performed by Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Richard took the customary oath to fear God and execute justice. The cloak, or upper clothing, of the king, was then taken off, sandals of gold were placed upon his feet, and he was anointed with oil upon the head, breast, and shoulders; afterwards receiving the insignia of his rank from the state officers in attendance. Richard was then led to the altar, where he renewed the vows he had taken; and, lifting with his own hands the crown from off the altar—which he did in token that he received it from God alone—he gave it to the archbishop, who placed it upon his head.

The day of the new king's coronation was marked by an event which resulted in an attack upon all the Jews assembled in the city, who were barbarously murdered with their wives and children. In the Middle Ages, while the science of finance was in its infancy, and men had not yet learned to associate together for purposes of trade, the Jews were the principal, if not the only, bankers of Christendom. There were no laws in existence to regulate the interest of money, and their profits were frequently enormous. The wealth which they thus obtained, no less than the obnoxious faith to which they firmly adhered, caused them to become objects of hatred to the people; and this feeling was increased at the date of the new crusade, in consequence of the increased rate of interest they demanded from men who were about to risk their lives in that dangerous journey. During the reign of Henry II. the Jews had enjoyed some degree of protection, and had, accordingly, increased in numbers and wealth. In France they were less fortunate. On the accession of Philip II he had issued an edict ordering the banishment of all the Jews from the kingdom, and the confiscation of their property. Hated by the people, the persecuted race had no other hope than in the favour of the prince, and, fearing that Richard might be disposed to follow the example of his ally, the King of France, they determined to secure his protection by presents of great value.

ST. BERNARD PREACHING THE SECOND CRUSADE.

FROM THE PAINTING BY JAMES ARCHER, R.S.A.

At the coronation of Richard, the chief men of the Jewish race proceeded to Westminster to lay their offerings at his feet. Being apprised of their intention, Richard, who is said to have feared some evil influence* from their presence, issued a proclamation, forbidding Jews and women to be present at Westminster on that day, either in the church, where he was to receive the crown, or in the hall, where he was to take dinner. Some of the Jews, however, trusting that the object of their errand would excuse the breach of the royal command, attempted to enter the church among the crowd, and were attacked and beaten by the king's servants. A report was then rapidly circulated among the multitude outside, that the king had delivered up the unbelievers to the vengeance of the people. Headed by some of the lower class of knights and nobles, who were not sorry to get rid of men to whom they owed large sums of money, the crowd surrounded the unhappy Jews, and drove them along the streets with staves and stones, killing many of them before they could reach the doors of their houses. At night the excitement spread throughout the town, and the populace attacked the dwellings of the hated race in every direction. These being strongly barricaded from within, were set on fire by the mob, and all the inmates who were not destroyed in the flames, and who attempted to escape by the doors, were received on the swords of their adversaries.

Preparations were now about to be made for the Third Crusade. The Second Crusade, headed by Louis VII. of France and the Emperor Conrad of Germany, had been a total failure. Although 200,000 persons perished in it, it is not to be ranked in importance with those which preceded and followed it. It was preached in 1146 with all the zeal of the celebrated St. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, who was noted equally for eloquence and piety, but its acceptance was confined to France and Germany, and it took the character of a great military expedition rather than of a popular movement. The result of the expedition was disastrous, and the princes returned in 1149 to Europe with only the scattered remnants of their noble army. The events of this crusade being comparatively unimportant, and having only an indirect connection with English history, it has not been considered necessary to relate them in detail. The state of affairs in the East, which induced the kings of France and England to determine upon a third crusade, has been briefly referred to in a preceding chapter. (*See pp.* 207–8).

To raise money for the expedition to Palestine, Richard adopted a policy similar to that which, in the reign of Stephen, had so greatly reduced the revenues of the state. He publicly sold the estates of the crown to the highest bidder—towns, castles, and domains. Many rich Normans of low birth thus became possessed of lands which, at the time of the Conquest, had been distributed among the immediate followers of William; and many men of English race availed themselves of the opportunity to recover the houses of their fathers, and, under a quit rent, became the lawful owners of their places of abode. The towns which concluded these bargains became corporations, and were organised under a municipal government. Many of these charters were made in the reigns of Richard I. and his successors. In these transactions Richard appears to have been influenced solely by his determination to obtain money, and when some of his courtiers ventured to remonstrate with him, he said that he would sell London itself, if he could find a buyer.

Titles and offices of state were sold without scruple. Hugh Pudsey, Bishop of Durham, purchased the earldom of Northumberland, and also obtained, for a payment of 1,000 marks, the chief justiciarship of the kingdom. It has been already related that, at the time of Richard's accession, this office was held by Ranulph de Glanville, a man of great ability and undoubted probity. One account tells us that Glanville resigned the office for the purpose of joining the crusade; but other historians relate that he was driven from it by the king, who was willing to obtain money even by the disgrace of an old and valuable servant of the crown. Vacant ecclesiastical benefices were filled up by the appointment of those who could best afford to pay for them. In addition to the sums raised by these measures, Richard obtained 20,000 marks from the King of Scotland, who in return was released from homage to the English crown.

While Richard thus appeared to be making every preparation for the expedition to the Holy Land, he showed no hurry to leave his new kingdom; and Philip of France, with whom he had engaged to join his forces, sent ambassadors to England to announce his intention to depart at the ensuing Easter. Richard then convoked an assembly of the nobles of the kingdom, and

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* It was a common belief among the people of this superstitious age that the Jews were guilty of the practice of sorcery

CORONATION OF RICHARD IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY: THE PROCESSION ALONG THE AISLE (*See p.* 218.)

declared his intention to proceed to the Holy Land in company with his brother of France. He placed the regency in the hands of William Longchamp, Bishop of Ely, and Hugh Pudsey, Bishop of Durham; the former of whom succeeded, not long afterwards, in securing the entire authority into his own hands. Prince John was thus deprived of the position which he had calculated would fall to him, and he received by way of compensation, a pension of 4,000 marks, the territory of Mortaigne in Normandy, and the earldoms of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, and Somerset. He possessed, besides, Derbyshire, for his wife was the heiress of the Earl of Gloucester.

Early in the following year (1190) Richard crossed the Channel into Normandy, and soon afterwards a meeting took place between the two kings of France and England, at which they bound themselves to a compact of brotherhood and alliance, each swearing to maintain the life and honour of the other as he would his own. The death of the young Queen of France caused a delay in the departure of the expedition, and it was not until midsummer that the armies of the two kings assembled for that purpose. The allied forces are said to have numbered 100,000, and having been united on the plains of Vézelai, they marched in company to Lyons. At this point the two kings separated. Philip, who possessed no ships or seaport town on the Mediterranean, proceeded by land to Genoa, that powerful republic having agreed to furnish a fleet of transports for the convoy of his troops. Richard was in possession of the powerful fleet built by his father for the voyage to Palestine, as well as of trading vessels, which he had himself selected from different seaports, and he, therefore, had no need to make the journey across the Alps. He proceeded from Lyons to Marseilles, where he embarked.

VIEW IN GENOA: THE DOGANA.

Richard landed on the shore of the narrow strait which divides Sicily from Calabria, whence he was conveyed to the harbour of Messina. The French king had already arrived, and soon afterwards set sail with the view of continuing his voyage to the East. His ships, however, experienced bad weather, which compelled them to return to the port, and the two kings then arranged to remain there during the winter.

The island of Sicily, which in the preceding century had been conquered by the Norman lords of Apulia and Calabria, then formed, together with a part of lower Italy, a kingdom which was under the control of the Holy See. Not many years before, under the reign of William I., the country had been in a prosperous condition, but now it was weakened by internal dissensions, and in no position to offer a successful defence to attacks from without. William II., surnamed the Good, had married Richard's sister Joan, who bore to him no children. Anxious to preserve the succession to his family, he caused his aunt, the Princess Constance, who was the only legitimate member of the family, to be married to Henry, son and heir of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. By securing to her a powerful husband, able to support her claims, the king trusted to overcome that opposition to a female sovereign which was likely to be even greater in Sicily than in other countries of Europe. Constance, at the age of thirty-two, was considerably older than her husband; but her dower was rich, and this, joined to the prospect of the succession, proved attraction sufficient for the young prince. He married her in the year 1186, at Milan. In November, 1189, William the Good died, appointing by his will that his aunt Constance should be his successor. The barons of the kingdom had previously taken an oath of fealty to the princess, but that oath, as well as the will of the king, was entirely disregarded. The nobles were necessarily indisposed to submit to the rule of a foreign prince, and the aggressions of the German emperors in the north of Italy had given good cause for dread of any further increase of their power. Constance and Henry were also out of the country at this critical moment, and the barons, after various disputes among themselves, conferred the crown upon Tancred, nephew to William the Good, though reputed to be illegitimate by birth. The new king was hailed by the people with acclamation, and was acknowledged by the Pope, Clement III., who sent him the customary benediction. His reign, however, had no sooner commenced, than various conspiracies were formed against him by the barons who had been competitors for the throne, and though he had succeeded in reducing these to submission, he was threatened by Henry, who had now become emperor, and who was preparing a powerful army to support the claims of his wife Constance.

Such was the position of affairs in Sicily at the time of the arrival of the kings of England and of France. Both monarchs were received by Tancred with every token of honour and hospitality; Philip was entertained within the city of Messina, and Richard took up his quarters in a house without the walls, situated in the midst of a vineyard. After having remained for a very brief period in tranquillity, Richard found in the position of his sister Joan a cause of quarrel with the King of Sicily. At the time of the marriage of that princess with William the Good, a splendid dower had been given to her by her husband, including many towns and cities, and territory of considerable extent. When Tancred ascended the throne, he withheld these broad lands, part of which, however, were occupied by nobles who were in rebellion, and which, therefore, it would not have been easy to deliver up. Richard first demanded that his sister should be sent to him, and when the request was complied with, he sent other messengers requiring the whole of her dower. Without waiting for an answer the impetuous prince passed over to the Calabrian shore, and seized possession of the castle of Bagnara. Here he left his sister defended by a body of troops, and returned to Messina. On the borders of the strait, overlooking the English camp, there was a convent of Greek monks, having a strong natural position, and capable of being easily fortified. Richard drove out the monks, and placed in their stead a strong garrison, who turned the monastery into a fortress, and issued thence on licentious excursions through the town and the neighbourhood. The disorders of the foreigners at length aroused the indignation of the Sicilians, who, jealous of the honour of their wives and daughters, suddenly attacked the English, who were in the city, and at the same time closed the gates of the town. The whole camp speedily took to arms, and assembled without the walls, making a reckless and unorganised assault upon them. Richard having received news of the tumult, mounted his horse and rode hastily among his soldiers, beating them back with a truncheon which he carried in his hand. By exertions of this kind, joined to the influence of his character, he succeeded in restraining his troops, not, however, before some animosities which had arisen between them and the French soldiers had found vent in several partial combats. The kings of France and England held a solemn meeting, at which to arrange against future differences of this kind, as well as to determine upon a peace with the Sicilians. On the hill overlooking the Norman camp a number of the natives were assembled, and during the conference they attacked a few stragglers from the camp. Having learnt the cause of the uproar, Richard called his men to arms, drove the Sicilians from the hill, and followed them to the walls of the city, which the English now attacked under the direction of their prince. The troops of Tancred made little resistance against their impetuous assailants; the town was carried by storm, and Richard raised his banner on the walls as though the town had become exclusively his. The jealousy of Philip was excited, and a rupture took place between the two princes, which was appeased only by the town being given into the hands of the Knights Hospitallers and Knights Templars, who were to hold possession of it until the claims of Richard against Tancred had been finally adjusted.

In addition to the territories assigned to Joan as a dowry, she was entitled, as Queen of Sicily, to a golden table, twelve feet long, and a foot and a half broad; a golden chair; two golden trestles for supporting the tables: twenty-four silver cups, and as many silver dishes. William the Good had left in his will to Henry II. a contribution towards the Holy War, in which that prince was proposing to engage. This legacy consisted of a tent of silk to accommodate 200 persons seated, 60,000 measures of wheat and 60,000 of barley, with 100 armed galleys, equipped and provisioned for two years. Henry II. died before his son-in-law, and, therefore, Richard could prefer no legal claim in right of his father. He, nevertheless, demanded that all these things should be given up to him, as well as the treasures to which his sister was entitled. An agreement was ultimately entered into, by which a sum of 20,000 gold ounces was paid to Joan, and a further sum of 20,000 ounces to Richard, in satisfaction of their several demands. The legality of Richard's claim was not acknowledged, but the money was paid to him ostensibly on a treaty of marriage, which was concluded between his young nephew Arthur and an infant daughter of Tancred. The payment thus took the form of a dower, and was to be returned in case either of the children died before they reached a marriageable age.

The money of which Richard thus became possessed was lavished with the utmost prodigality. His tastes were magnificent; and the extraordinary fame which he had acquired throughout Europe was due no less to his own gigantic strength and brilliant valour than to the glittering halo of romance which surrounded him, and the splendour with which he dazzled the eyes of his followers. Soldiers of fortune of every country came to offer their swords to Cœur-de-Lion, and were received with welcome and entertainment. Tournaments and spectacles of various kinds succeeded each other; the sounds of mirth and music resounded through the camps; troubadours and jongleurs offered their feats of skill, or songs of war and beauty, secure of a liberal reward. Relying upon his strong arm to replenish his coffers, Richard showered gifts and largesses upon all comers; and at a great banquet which he gave to the knights of both armies, he sent away each of his guests with a large present of money. Thus, throughout the winter the soldiers of the North gave themselves up to luxury and pleasure under the sunny sky of Sicily. But Cœur-de-Lion was no mere voluptuary. If, in many respects, he bore a resemblance to the gallant but ill-fated Robert of Normandy, he possessed, at the same time, a degree of intellectual power and energy little inferior to that of William the Conqueror. Amidst the glare of rich banquets and gorgeous spectacles, amidst the tinkling of harps whose strings were attuned to flattery, and the glances of bright eyes, which brought their tribute of admiration to the young prince of the Lion Heart, his ardent nature languished and longed for activity. There was a strong impulsive force within the men of those days, which rendered exertion the only pleasure—ease and rest a punishment not to be endured. Cut off for a time from the excitements of battle, Richard sought occupation in the field of theological controversy and the exercises of religion.

At this time a certain Calabrian monk, named Joachim, Abbot of Curacio, had made himself famous throughout Europe by his writings and preachings against the abuses of the court of Rome. We have already seen how at intervals, during the Middle Ages, some sandalled monk would rise up from obscurity, and, by the mere force of intellect, with no advantages of outward circumstances, would obtain a power over the minds of men, compared with which that of princes was as nothing. This influence was of a purely personal nature, and was attained by the gift of eloquence. The books which Joachim had written would have availed little—they appealed only to the few who could read them, and to posterity—but the *man* could speak his thought in the ear of the present. We know little, in these later times, of the meaning of the word eloquence—we apply it to what is written, to thoughts expressed upon inanimate paper—dull and lifeless, as words from the mouth of a statue. The growth of civilisation is unfavourable to eloquence, for civilisation is built up of laws and customs, and the language of the heart defies all law, and pays no deference to expediency. The modern teacher dare not trust his heart. Sermons are written, speeches are prepared, periods carefully rounded, sentiments weighed in the nicest balance—even the tone of the voice and the motion of the arm—are studied beforehand under a master. The influence attained is exactly commensurate with the means employed, and the listeners find themselves on a level of caution, equally removed from danger on the one hand, or from excellence on the other. But such a level is not the normal condition of the human mind. When, at rare intervals, the torch of enthusiasm is lighted by some earnest man, thousands will burst away to follow the flame, though it lead them to utter destruction.

Richard Cœur-de-Lion, like his ancestors, recognised that subtle force of intellect whose influence among men surpassed that of laws or armies. He heard of the fame of the Abbot Joachim, and desired to see him. The king and the monk met together at Messina, where a long theological discussion took place between these strange disputants. Joachim, like all the other clergy of the age, gave his authority in favour of the Crusade. He assumed the gift of inspiration, and, like a prophet of old, told the king to go forth and conquer: the infidel should be scattered before the Christian host, and the banner of the Cross be raised once more over the walls of Jerusalem. These were but the ravings of fanaticism, and were utterly falsified by the event; but their influence, meanwhile, was none the less upon those who listened and regarded the speaker as a prophet. Richard's mind was of higher order, and he is said to have called the monk a vain babbler, whose words were unworthy of attention. It is not probable, however, that he expressed such an opinion publicly, for he could not be insensible to the effect of such predictions upon the minds of his soldiers.

Not long after this discussion, Richard rode to the town of Catania, where he had appointed to meet Tancred for the first time. With all the state and magnificence suited to the occasion, the two kings walked in procession to the church, where, forgetting all former differences, they took vows of mutual friendship, and performed their devotions together before the shrine of St. Agatha. On the return of Cœur-de-Lion to Messina, the Sicilian king accompanied him for many miles, and at the moment of parting gave into his hands a letter written by Philip of France, in which Philip proposed to ally himself with Tancred, and to drive the English monarch out of the country.

Some days elapsed before Richard made any use of this communication; but he met Philip with haughtiness and reserve, and frequent disputes took place between them. At length, during one of these altercations, Cœur-de-Lion suddenly produced the letter, and asked whether he knew the handwriting. Philip indignantly declared it to be a forgery, and accused Richard of seeking a cause of quarrel, by which means he might break off his contract of marriage with the Princess Alice, Philip's sister. Richard replied calmly that he could not marry the lady Alice, since it was well known that she had borne a son to his father, King Henry. This circumstance, if true, was well known to Richard during his father's lifetime, when he had so frequently demanded that his bride should be given up to him—a request which, it is evident, had merely been made as a pretext for rebellion. Richard now offered proofs of what he had alleged, and, whatever may have been the force of these proofs, Philip consented to give up the contest. In the days of chivalry, as now, money was accepted in compensation for breaches of such contracts, and Philip sold the honour of his sister for an annual pension of 2,000 marks for five years. For this sum he gave Richard permission to marry whomsoever he pleased.

Cœur-de-Lion had already chosen his bride. Some three years before, while staying at the court of Navarre, he had fallen in love with Berengaria, daughter of the king of that country. The young princess is described as having been very beautiful, of extremely youthful and delicate appearance, presenting in every respect the most striking contrast to the robust frame and gigantic presence of her lover. Their passion seems to have been more romantic and sincere than usually happens in similar cases. It is certain that Richard asked for no dowry with his bride, sought for no political advantages, but merely dispatched his mother, Queen Eleanor, to ask the lady's hand.

Such conduct alone might have won the heart of Berengaria, even though she had not been already interested in his favour. Undeterred by the dangers and difficulties of the journey across the Alps, she at once set out to join her intended husband. The queen and the princess travelled with a suitable escort, and reached Naples in safety. Thence they passed on to the city of Brindisi, where they waited until the French king should have departed to the Holy Land. Philip set sail for Acre on the 30th of March, 1191; and Richard, at the same time, proceeded to Reggio, on the coast of Calabria, where he took on board his bride, with Queen Eleanor, and carried them to Messina. The season of Lent being not yet over, the marriage was deferred; and Eleanor, having confided her charge to her own daughter, Joan, returned to England.

ISAAC OF CYPRUS BEGGING FOR THE RELEASE OF HIS DAUGHTER. (*See p.* 226.)

Within a few days afterwards the English fleet was ready for sea, and passed with a stiff breeze through the straits of Messina. More than 200 vessels were there, some of large size, with three masts, and all well appointed, and gaily decked with the banners of the crusaders. Never before had so gallant an armament been seen in those waters; and as the brilliant pageant moved away, the Sicilians gathered in multitudes on the shore with cries of admiration. In those days war was, with half the world, the business of life; women did not hesitate to share the dangers of those whom they loved, and the smile of beauty was at once the incentive and the reward of valour. Joan and Berengaria accompanied the expedition, and Richard, with a delicacy which belonged to his chivalrous character, fitted up a splendid galley, which was allotted to their separate use.

The fleet was not destined to proceed far in such gallant trim. Within a very few hours a heavy storm arose, and many of the ships, dismasted and at the mercy of the waves, were cast ashore and broken to pieces. Richard himself narrowly escaped shipwreck, and was compelled to put into the island of Rhodes, not knowing what had become of the vessel of his bride. While he lay there in the greatest anxiety of mind, he learnt that two of his ships had been wrecked on the coast of Cyprus, and that his people had been plundered and cast into prison by the natives. Vowing vengeance, Richard collected all the vessels which had arrived at Rhodes, and immediately proceeded to the succour of the captives. On approaching the harbour of Limasol in Cyprus, he fell in with the galley of Joan and Berengaria who, like himself, had escaped from the storm, but had hesitated to trust themselves nearer to the shore.

The island of Cyprus was at that time colonised by the Greeks, under the rule of a prince of the race of the Comneni, named Isaac, who called himself "Emperor of Cyprus." This mighty monarch of a score of square miles seems to have known little of the character of the English king, for when Richard demanded satisfaction for the injuries done to the crusaders, he returned an arrogant refusal, and drew up his soldiers in battle array upon the shore. Cœur-de-Lion immediately landed a body of troops, who put to flight the half-naked men of Cyprus, and took possession of the city.

Isaac now sent in his submission to the conqueror, and on a plain near Limasol a conference took place between them. Richard demanded, not only an indemnity in money, but also that the "Emperor of Cyprus" should do homage to him, and should accompany him to Palestine with a thousand of his best warriors. The daughter and heiress of Isaac was to be placed in Richard's hands as a hostage for the good faith of her father. The Greek, with that mixture of shrewdness and deceit characteristic of his race, consented to these terms, and on the same night he escaped from the guards placed over him by Richard, and organised new plans, which proved as vain as before, to resist the invaders.

Leaving a garrison at Limasol, Richard sailed round the island, capturing all the ships of the Cypriotes, and taking possession of their towns. Nicosia, the capital, surrendered with little resistance, and among the prisoners who fell into his hands was the young princess, the daughter of Isaac. The "Emperor" loved his child, and when he heard of her capture he made no further resistance; but quitting a monastery in which he had fortified himself, he placed himself at once in the power of Richard, fell at his feet, and prayed that his daughter might be restored to him. Cœur-de-Lion refused the request, and committed him to prison, directing that, in consideration of the rank he assumed, he should be bound with chains of silver instead of iron. It is difficult to understand how any rational being should have derived satisfaction from such a distinction; but it appears that the "Emperor of Cyprus" did so, and expressed himself much gratified by the honour done him.

At Limasol there were great stores of provisions of all kinds, and a splendid festival was prepared to celebrate the landing of the Princess Berengaria. Here, at length, Cœur-de-Lion claimed his bride, and the marriage ceremony was performed by the Bishop of Evreux. For a few days the accoutrements of war were put aside, the songs of the minstrels were again heard through the camp, and the sweet wine of Cyprus lent its intoxicating influence to the scene of revelry. Richard, however, was pre-eminently a soldier; martial glory was his true mistress, and he did not long delay the expedition on which he was engaged. In a little more than a month after his arrival at Cyprus the fleet set sail for Acre, and arrived there on the 8th of June.

All the chivalry of Europe was collected before this city, which was regarded as the key to the Holy Land. Hospitallers and Templars, priests and princes, knights of high and low degree, from every Christian country, had flocked to lay down their lives in a cause which they believed to be sacred. For two years before the arrival of Richard the siege had been carried on with all the military skill of the age; but, while thousands* of the besiegers fell victims to disease and privation, or to their own desperate valour, the city still held out, and its massive walls defied the force of the mightiest engines of war. Each month brought new reinforcements to the banner of the Cross, and thus an army, to which Europe could find no equal, maintained its numerical strength while the work of death went on.

Saladin, one of the greatest names in Eastern history, had posted his immense forces upon the heights about Mount Carmel, whence he watched the great armament of Richard, still numbering more than one hundred sail, as it advanced into the roadstead of Acre. The fame of Cœur-de-Lion had gone before him, and the crusaders hailed his approach with shouts of rejoicing. Gay banners flashed in the sun, and trumpets and drums sounded their loudest note of welcome. Philip, however, could not witness without envy the power and splendour of his ally. Not many days elapsed before a quarrel took place between them; and each refusing to act in concert with the other, made separate attacks upon the town, in the hope of obtaining the exclusive honour of the capture. Both of these ill-judged attempts were unsuccessful, and were attended with heavy loss.

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* The accounts of different writers vary considerably, but one of the lowest estimates states that nearly 200,000 men, among whom were six archbishops, and many bishops and nobles of high rank, perished before the walls of Acre.

At length the brave garrison of Acre, cut off from all supplies, were compelled to offer terms of capitulation. They agreed to surrender possession of the city, together with all the Christian prisoners it contained, and the wood of the true cross. A sum of 200,000 pieces of gold was to be paid by Saladin within forty days, as a ransom for the lives of the inhabitants, several thousands of whom were retained as hostages for the performance of these conditions.

The Army of the Cross entered Acre on the 12th of June, 1191, and at the same time Saladin withdrew from the neighbouring heights, and proceeded a short distance into the interior to concentrate his forces. Soon afterwards Philip of France expressed his intention to return to Europe. The reason he gave for doing so was the bad state of his health; and it is not improbable that this prince, who seems to have possessed neither the occasional religious impulses nor the warlike spirit of Cœur-de-Lion, should have found the first approaches of disease sufficient to deter him from the toils and dangers of a journey to the Holy Sepulchre. Other causes were, however, at work. The title of King of Jerusalem was still a subject of dispute among the crusaders, although the city itself was now in the hands of the infidel. The crown had been assumed by Guy of Lusignan, in right of his wife Sybilla, a descendant of Godfrey of Bouillon. During the siege of Acre, Sybilla died; and her sister Isabella, who had married Conrad of Montferrat, Prince of Tyre, put in her claim to confer the title on her husband. While Philip had declared in favour of Conrad, Richard—who seems to have acted merely from the desire of opposing his ally—supported the cause of Lusignan, and acknowledged him King of Jerusalem. In this, as in every other dispute between the two monarchs, Philip was compelled to yield; but he did so with an ill grace, and it was hardly to be expected that the King of France could long submit to such a course of humiliation. He determined to return to his own country, where his will was law, and his power absolute; and where, too, he might have opportunity, during the absence of the English king, to seize upon some portion of the latter's territories, and extend the rather circumscribed limits of the French kingdom.

Richard at first received the news of Philip's intended departure with a malediction, calling down shame upon his head for deserting the holy cause in which he was engaged. The feeling of anger seems soon to have given place to something like contempt, for Cœur-de-Lion added, "Let him go, if his health needs it, and he cannot live away from Paris." But the probable designs of the French king were not overlooked; and he was compelled to take an oath that he would make no aggression upon English territories during the absence of Richard in Palestine. He also agreed to leave at Acre 10,000 men, commanded by the Duke of Burgundy, but under the control of Cœur-de-Lion.

Soon after Philip quitted Acre, the term of forty days appointed for the ransom of the Saracen captives expired. No ransom had been received. The messengers of Richard, who made their way into the presence of the soldan, were received with the highest courtesy, and were dismissed with costly presents to their master; but to the demand for money Saladin returned no answer. It was reported among the crusaders that he had massacred the Christian prisoners in his power; and a great excitement arose among the troops at Acre, who called loudly for vengeance. And now took place one of the worst of those atrocious deeds which stain the history of the crusades. On the forty-first day, under the orders of Richard and the Duke of Burgundy, the unhappy Saracen captives were led out beyond the camps, and were there butchered without mercy, some few rich men only being spared, in the hope that large sums would be obtained for their ransom.* So blinded were the crusaders by their fanatic zeal, that this massacre in cold blood was regarded by the perpetrators as a righteous deed, acceptable to Heaven.

On receiving the news of the massacre, Saladin put to death all the Christian prisoners in his hands. Such an act of retaliation, however it may now be regarded, was in accordance with the usages of the time; and it is hardly to be expected that the Moslem should display more mercy than the Christian. With hands reeking with the blood of their victims, the crusaders returned to the city, where they gave themselves up to debauchery and excess. Many of them would probably have been well disposed to go no farther; but Richard roused them once more into activity, and his will was not to be resisted. He left his young wife and his sister behind him, defended by a strong garrison, and strictly forbade women of all ranks from accompanying the army. He quitted Acre on the 22nd of August, with about 30,000 men, of all the nations of Christendom, and took his way along the sea shore towards Ascalon. Saladin, whose scouts were everywhere, was speedily apprised of the march of the crusaders; and he appeared at a distance with a great army, hovering about them, and keeping them continually in expectation of attack. The troops of Richard, however, marched fearlessly on; and when, after a day's march across those burning plains, exhausted by the weight of their heavy armour, they reached a halting-place, a herald stood forth from each camp, and cried aloud three times, "Save the Holy Sepulchre!" and the whole army knelt down, and said, "Amen!" Human nature displays the most striking contrasts where the fortunes of men are subject to extremes of vicissitude; and thus the soldiers who one day were engaged in acts of brutal cruelty or sensuality, on the next might be seen marching to the death with a devotion which, if mistaken, was not the less sublime.

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* Roger of Hoveden states that 5,000 infidels were thus destroyed. Other accounts give even a larger number.

RICHARD AT THE BATTLE OF AZOTUS. (*See p.* 229.)

When Richard had advanced as far as Azotus he was opposed by the Saracen forces, ranged in order of battle. Saladin, whose skill as a general was scarcely inferior to that of Cœur-de-Lion himself, conducted the attack in person; and for a time the Christian troops gave way before him. Richard, who commanded the centre of the army, waited with great coolness until the

FOUNTAIN NEAR JAFFA.

Saracens had exhausted their arrows; then placing himself at the head of his knights, and brandishing the formidable battle-axe which was his favourite weapon, he rushed upon the enemy, slaying with his own hand all who fell within his reach. Many of the feats of valour attributed to him by the chroniclers are wholly incredible; but after making all reasonable deduction for exaggeration, enough remains to prove that Cœur-de-Lion deserved the proud surname which he bore, and that his strength and valour were alike without parallel. The Saracen army, numerous as it was, could not withstand the charge of the mail-clad warriors of Europe; and Saladin was compelled to beat a hasty retreat, leaving behind him seven thousand dead upon the field.

Richard advanced to Jaffa—the Joppa of the Bible—of which city he obtained possession without opposition; but here a delay took place, which proved fatal to the success of the expedition. Some of the chief men of the army alleged that it would be necessary to repair the fortifications of Jaffa, for the purpose of placing it in a condition of defence. The soldiers, remembering the pleasures of Acre, willingly adopted a pretext which afforded a new opportunity of rest and enjoyment; and Richard himself, attracted by the field-sports to be obtained in the neighbourhood, appears to have laid aside for a time his customary energy. Saladin, who had recovered from his defeat, and was intent upon vengeance, was known to be in the neighbourhood, with an army even larger than before; but Cœur-de-Lion, undisturbed by this circumstance, rode about the country with a small escort. Many strange adventures are told in connection with these expeditions; and it would appear that Richard was often in imminent danger of being captured—a fate from which his courage or good fortune invariably saved him.

Various negotiations now ensued, which appear to have led to nothing, and were probably devised by the Saracens merely to gain time. The envoy who passed between the two camps on these occasions was Saif-ed-Deen, or Saphadin, the brother of Saladin, who was a man of great ability, and who conducted his missions in such a manner as to gain the favour of Cœur-de-Lion. At length, in the month of November, the fortifications of Jaffa were completed, negotiations were broken off, and the crusaders resumed their march. The sky was black with tempest, and as they crossed the plain of Sharon, where now the rose and lily of the valley bloomed no longer, a violent wind arose, and thick rain began to fall. The heaviest storms are found in those countries where the sun shines brightest, and it was now the commencement of the rainy season. The soldiers of the Cross, ill provided with protection against such weather, pitched their camp at Ramula, the Arimathea of Scripture; but the streams which descended from the mountains inundated the encampment, and the winds tore up the tents which were their only shelter. Struggling on wearily, they reached Bethany, which was within twelve miles of Jerusalem, but here they found it impossible to proceed farther. Famine and disease had decimated the troops, and those who were still able to bear arms were ill suited to cope with an enemy. Richard was therefore compelled to retrace his steps, and he marched back rapidly to Ascalon, there to recruit his forces.

The fortifications of Ascalon had been dismantled by Saladin; but Cœur-de-Lion, whose energetic spirit no reverses could subdue, set himself immediately to restore the defences, and appeared among his men doing the work of a mason. Novelist or romancer never imagined more striking contrasts than are presented to us in the sober records of the Middle Ages, and thus we find the king who lately was the centre of unexampled pomp and splendour at Messina, now wielding the trowel and the pickaxe upon the walls of Ascalon. The example set by Richard was attended with the best effects; princes and nobles, bishops and their clergy, worked beside him as masons and carpenters, thinking it no shame to do what the King of England had done. The only exception was the Archduke of Austria, and on his refusal, it is related that Cœur-de-Lion kicked or struck that prince, and turned him and his retainers out of the town.

Having placed Ascalon in a condition of defence, Richard restored other fortifications destroyed by Saladin along the coast. These works, however, were attended with a vast expense, and Richard's generosity, which appears to have been without stint, whether much or little was at his command, hastened the exhaustion of his finances. The French and other foreign troops attached to his army were kept together by the largesses he gave them; but as the treasury became empty they relaxed in their obedience, and their national animosities found vent in repeated quarrels and disturbances. The dispute between Conrad of Montferrat and Guy of Lusignan for the crown of Jerusalem was renewed. Conrad, whose character was vacillating and treacherous, was nevertheless a man of considerable ability and of high military renown. Having secured the assistance of the Genoese, he defied the power of the King of England, and a civil war appeared to be imminent among the Christians of Palestine. The Pisans, whose old hatred against the Genoese led them to take the opposite side, declared for Lusignan, and frequent combats took place in the very streets of Acre between the opposing factions. Richard quitted Ascalon, and succeeded in repressing these tumults. He endeavoured to restore unanimity to the army, and to conciliate the Marquis of Montferrat; but that haughty chief rejected his offers, and entrenched himself in the town of Tyre, with a number of disaffected soldiers of different nations who had joined his standard.

Saladin soon became aware of the dissensions in the Christian army, and he made preparations for striking what he hoped would be a decisive and successful blow. But in the meanwhile he was unexpectedly met by proposals for peace from Cœur-de-Lion, who sent him word that he demanded only the possession of Jerusalem and the wood of the true Cross. The soldan returned for answer that the blessed city* was as dear to the Moslem as to the Christian, and would never be delivered up except by force.

The unusual course pursued by Richard was not to be attributed to such an inadequate cause as the disaffection of a part of his troops. He had lately received letters from his mother, Queen Eleanor, and from William Longchamp, whom he had appointed chancellor in his absence, detailing various conspiracies which were fraught with the greatest danger to the throne. It is not necessary to interrupt the narrative for the purpose of relating the particulars of these matters; they will be given in detail when the history returns to the consideration of events in England. It is enough to say that they were of a nature to cause the greatest disquietude, even to the strong mind of Cœur-de-Lion. It is reported that he set on foot new negotiations with Saladin, which continued for some time, and that he even proposed that the contest should be terminated by the marriage of his own sister Joan with Saphadin, the brother of the Sultan. This extraordinary scheme, if it ever really was entertained, was defeated by religious obstacles; the clergy launching the thunders of the Church against all those who should sanction the union between a Christian princess and a chief of the infidels.

Saladin had abilities of a very high order, joined to bodily strength little inferior to that of Cœur-de-Lion himself. He was skilled in the learning of the East, and he possessed that refinement of manners which was induced by the usages of chivalry. The virtues of a warlike age appeared in him pre-eminently; he was brave, generous, and true to his word, preserving his plighted faith with a degree of scrupulousness not often observed even by the princes of Christendom. Descended from the race of the Seljuks, he had embraced the religion of Mahomet, whose doctrines taught him to pursue to utter destruction all the enemies of the Prophet. But Saladin was no bigoted Mussulman, and when the foes he had conquered appeared before him as suppliants, he seldom failed to grant the mercy they implored. It is needless to say that this picture has its reverse, and that the character of the great soldan was not altogether blameless. He was in the highest degree ambitious, and his elevation to the throne was obtained by the unscrupulous shedding of blood. He trampled down all who stood in his way; but having attained that elevation, he proved himself a wise and just monarch, and his rule, of the whole, was free from tyranny.

The soldan and the Christian king, both on whom stood far above their contemporaries in military prowess and ability, had learnt mutual respect, and not all the injuries which each had inflicted on the other had power to subdue this feeling. Great minds can afford to be generous, and the depreciation of the merits of a rival seldom arises from any other cause than a consciousness of inferiority. Saladin and Richard met together many times with interchanges of courtesy, and the soldiers of both armies mingled in the tournament and in other martial exercises. Where the laws of chivalry prevailed, the warrior sheathed his enmity with his sword, and would have regarded it as a foul stain upon his knighthood to doubt for a moment the faith pledged to him by a foeman.

Pilgrims were continually arriving in the Holy Land from Europe, and from each traveller who appeared in the presence of Richard, he learnt news which compelled him to hasten his return to England, although he had sworn never to abandon the expedition so long as he had a war-horse to eat. In the hope of establishing peace among all parties, he consented that Conrad of Montferrat should be crowned King of Jerusalem, and gave to Lusignan, by way of compensation, the island of Cyprus. It is probable that the energetic character of Conrad might ultimately have enabled him to obtain possession of Jerusalem, but at the time when he was preparing for his coronation he was murdered in the streets of Tyre, by two men of the sect of the Assassins. This name, then quite new to the languages of Europe, was applied to those fanatical Moslems who devoted themselves to assassinating the enemies of their faith by surprise, in the belief that they should thus secure admission into paradise. In the mountain defiles of Lebanon there lived a whole tribe of these enthusiasts, under the rule of the Old Man* of the Mountain, a mysterious chief, whose name became a sound of terror throughout Europe. They were called in Arabic "Haschischin," from an intoxicating plant (*haschisch*, Chang) well known in the East, which they made use of to stupefy the brain and excite themselves to their desperate deeds of blood.

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* "El Gootz," or "The Blessed City," is the Arab name of Jerusalem to this day.

It would appear that Conrad was murdered in revenge for certain injuries which he had inflicted upon this extraordinary people. An Arabic writer relates that when the two Assassins were seized and put to the torture, they confessed that they had been employed by the King of England; but this account differs from others, and is so completely at variance with all we know of the Assassins, as well as of the character of Richard, that it may be at once rejected as fabulous. Apart from the arguments which may be adduced to show, from the previous arrangements of the king, that he had no anticipation of the death of Conrad, the whole tenor of the life of Cœur-de-Lion serves to prove that he was not the man to strike a foe in secret. The French and German factions, however, at once spread a report that he had instigated the murder, and letters were sent to Philip of France containing the same news. Philip, who contemplated a descent upon the English territory, eagerly seized a pretext for his treason. He applied to the Pope to release him from his oath of peace, and declared that he had received a caution that the King of England had sent some of those dreaded Assassins of the East to murder him.

During the tumult which followed the death

JAFFA, FROM THE SANDS.

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* The Arabic word "Sheikh," translated by the Crusaders "Old Man," means also the chief of a tribe

RICHARD LANDING AT JAFFA. *(See p. 234.)*

of Conrad, Count Henry of Champagne, the nephew of Richard, appeared on the scene, and the people of Tyre placed him in possession of the town, as well as of the other territories held by their late prince. Soon afterwards Henry married the young widow of Conrad, receiving with her hand the title to the imaginary crown, and he was generally acknowledged by the crusaders as King of Jerusalem.

With each succeeding month the need for the presence of Richard in England appeared the greater; but he concealed his uneasiness, and, with the view of repressing the growing discontent in his army, he publicly proclaimed his intention to remain for another year in Palestine. Laying aside for a time all considerations connected with affairs at home, he determined to give his whole energies to bring to a successful termination the expedition in which he was engaged. Having at length restored something like unanimity to his troops, and brought them into an efficient state, he once more led them on the way to Jerusalem. The army resumed its march in the month of May, and reached the valley of Hebron, which was destined to be the extent of its journey. The circumstances which induced Richard to relinquish his long-cherished enterprise cannot now be known with certainty. Various versions are given by the different historians; but we find no occurrence which appears of sufficient importance to have changed the purpose of Cœur-de-Lion. It is certain, however, that a council assembled by the king decided upon the propriety of attacking Cairo, which was the main store-house of Saladin, rather than of marching upon Jerusalem. No sooner was it known among the troops that a counter-march was intended, than they threw aside all discipline: great numbers of them deserted, and Richard was compelled to return to Acre, as the only means of regaining the authority he had lost.

Saladin, who kept watch from the mountains upon all the movements of the crusaders, perceived the disorganised condition of the army, and chose that moment for an attack upon Jaffa, which he captured with little resistance. On learning the news, Richard at once dispatched by land the troops who remained with him, while he, with a small body of knights, proceeded by sea to the relief of the town. Cœur-de-Lion never showed his splendid military talents more strikingly than on this occasion. On arriving opposite the town, he found a vast host of the Saracens drawn up on the shore to receive him. His companions counselled him to turn back, saying that it was little else than madness to attack such overwhelming numbers; but Cœur-de-Lion knew that to dare is to reach half-way to victory, and he had learned to despise the nice calculation of probabilities. He leaped into the water, and cried, "Cursed for ever be he who follows me not!" At such a call no knight who desired to keep his spurs would dare to hang back, and one and all followed their leader to the shore, threw themselves upon the thick ranks of the enemy, and put them to flight. The gallant band of Richard then entered Jaffa, where they were joined by the troops who had marched by land.

On the following day the main body of the Saracen army, with Saladin at their head, advanced upon the town. Richard went forth to meet them on the plain, and a pitched battle ensued, in which, after many hours of hard fighting, he defeated them with great slaughter. It is scarcely too much to say that this success against a vastly superior force was due, in a large measure, to the extraordinary prowess of Cœur-de-Lion himself. Wherever he stretched out his ponderous battle-axe, horse and man went down before him; and it is said that such was the terror he inspired that whole bodies of the Saracen troops would turn and fly at his approach. Although the expedition to the Holy Land was not destined to attain its object, the fame of its leader was raised both in the East and in the West to a height which has never been equalled. For hundreds of years the name of Richard Cœur-de-Lion was employed by Syrian mothers to silence their infants; and if a horse suddenly started from the way, his rider was wont to exclaim, "Dost thou think King Richard is in that bush?"

The battle of Jaffa was Cœur-de-Lion's last victory in the Holy Land. His exertions on that day brought on a violent fever, and the state of his health, as well as the necessity of a return to England, induced him to conclude a treaty with his gallant enemy on terms which Saladin was glad to accept. A truce was proclaimed for three years, three months, three days, and three hours; the towns of Jaffa and Tyre were to remain in the hands of the Christians, and they were to be permitted at all times to visit Jerusalem as pilgrims without persecution or injury. To the French, who had refused to take part in the battle of Jaffa, Richard denied the benefits of this treaty, and told them that since they had held back from the fight, they were not worthy to enter the Holy City. The remaining portions of the army, casting aside their weapons of war, made the pilgrimage in safety, protected from all molestation by the pledge of Saladin. And yet the massacre of Acre was fresh in the memory of the Moslems, and many of the kinsmen of those who had perished there threw themselves at the feet of their chief, and implored him to take vengeance for the ruthless deed upon the Christians now in his power. But the soldan refused to listen to their entreaties, and replied that he had passed his word, which was sacred and unchangeable.

The third body of pilgrims which entered Jerusalem was headed by the Bishop of Salisbury, who was received with great honour, and was admitted to a long interview with Saladin. Many questions were put to him by his royal entertainer, who, among other matters, desired to know in what light he was regarded among the Christians. "What do they say," he asked, "of your king, and what of me?" The bishop answered boldly, "My king stands unrivalled among all men for deeds of might and gifts of generosity; but your fame also is high, and were you but converted to the true faith, there would not be two such princes as you and he in all the world." Saladin replied in a speech as wise as it was generous. He readily gave his tribute of admiration to the brilliant valour of Richard, but said that he was too rash and impetuous, and that, for his own part, he would rather be famed for skill and prudence than for mere audacity. At the request of the bishop, Saladin granted his permission that the Latin clergy should be allowed to have separate establishments at Jerusalem, as had previously been the case with the eastern churches.

CHAPTER XXII.

REIGN OF RICHARD I. (*concluded*).

Shipwreck of Richard—His Arrival in Austria—His Capture by the Archduke Leopold—He is Surrendered to the Emperor of Germany—Events in England—Renewed Persecution of the Jews—The Massacre at York—Quarrel between Longchamp and Pudsey—Stories about Longchamp—His Rupture with John, and Temporary Compromise—Imprisonment of Geoffrey of York—Longchamp takes Refuge in the Tower—His Deposition and Flight to France—Intrigues between John and Philip—Rumours of Richard's Imprisonment—The Story of Blondel—Richard before the Diet—Loyalty of Richard's Subjects, and Collection of the Ransom—Richard's Reception in England—His Expedition to France—Administration of Hubert Walter—William Fitz-Robert—Recommencement of Hostilities with France—The Bishop of Beauvais—Defeat of Philip—Death of Richard before Chaluz—His Character.

RICHARD set sail from Acre in October, 1192, with the queen Berengaria, his sister Joan, and all the knights and prelates who held fealty to the English crown. The proud heart of Cœur-de-Lion would not permit him to visit Jerusalem in the lowly guise of a pilgrim, but he quitted Palestine with feelings of the deepest regret; and he is reported to have stretched out his arms towards the hills, exclaiming, "Most holy land, I commend thee unto God's keeping. May He grant me life and health to return and rescue thee from the infidel!"

A heavy storm—attributed by the sailors to the displeasure of Heaven—overtook the returning fleet, scattering the ships, and casting many of them ashore on the coasts of Barbary and Egypt. The vessel which carried Joan and Berengaria arrived in safety at a port in Sicily. Richard had followed in the same direction, with the intention of landing in southern France; but he suddenly remembered that he had many bitter enemies in that country, in whose power it would be dangerous to trust himself, and he turned back to the Adriatic, dismissing the greater part of his followers, and intending to take his way homeward in disguise through Styria and Germany.

His vessel was attacked by Greek pirates; but he not only succeeded in repelling the attack, but in commanding their services to convey him to shore. Possibly his name may have had an influence, even with these robbers of the sea; but whatever were the means employed, it is certain that they placed themselves under his orders, and that he quitted his own ship for one of theirs, in which — the better to secure his disguise — he proceeded to Zara in Dalmatia, and there landed. He was attended by a Norman baron, named Baldwin of Bethune, two chaplains, a few Templars, and some servants. Richard had assumed the dress of a palmer, and, having suffered his hair and beard to grow long, went by the name of Hugh the Merchant. He had, however, not yet learned prudence, and those who were with him seemed to have been as deficient in this quality as himself. Cœur-de-Lion then hastened on his way through Germany, attended only by a single knight, and by a boy who spoke the English language, then very similar to the Saxon dialect of the Continent. For three days and nights they travelled without food among mountains covered with snow, not knowing in which direction they were going. They entered the province which had formed the eastern boundary of the old empire of the Franks, and was called Œsterreich, which means the East Country. This country, known to us by the name of Austria, was subject to the Emperor of Germany, and was governed by an Archduke, whose capital was Vienna, on the Danube. This duke was the same Leopold whom Richard had insulted at Ascalon, and with whom also, on a former occasion, he had a serious quarrel. This occurrence took place at Acre, where the duke having presumed to raise his standard on a portion of the walls, Cœur-de-Lion seized the flag and trampled it under foot.

Richard and his companions arrived at a small town near Vienna, exhausted with fatigue and fasting. It is not probable that the king could have proceeded so near the city without knowing where he was, but his immediate necessities were too pressing to leave any room for hesitation. Having taken a lodging, he sent the boy into the market-place to buy provisions. The boy was dressed in costly clothes, and these, together with the large sums of money which he exhibited, excited the suspicions of the citizens; but he made excuse that he was the servant of a rich merchant who was to arrive within three days at Vienna. When he returned to the king, he related what had happened, and begged him to escape while there was yet time. Richard, however, little accustomed to anticipate danger, and fatigued with his journey, determined to remain some days longer.

Meanwhile Leopold heard the rumour of the landing of his enemy at Zara, and, incited at once by feelings of revenge and by the hope of the large ransom which such a prisoner would command, sent out spies and armed men in all directions to search for him. As the duke was scarcely likely to anticipate the presence of the fugitive so near the capital, the search was made without success, and Cœur-de-Lion would doubtless have escaped undiscovered if another strange act of carelessness had not drawn suspicion upon him. One day, when the same boy who had before been arrested was again in the market-place, he was observed to carry in his girdle some embroidered gloves, such as were worn only by princes and great nobles on occasions of ceremony. He was again seized, and the torture was employed to bring him to confession. He revealed the truth, and pointed out the house in which King Richard was lodging. Cœur-de-Lion was in a deep sleep when the room in which he lay was entered by Austrian soldiers. He immediately sprang up and, seizing his sword, which lay beside him, kept them at bay, vowing that he would surrender to none but their chief. The soldiers, superior as their numbers were, hesitated to undertake the task of disarming him, and the Archduke of Austria having been sent for, Cœur-de-Lion gave up the sword into his hands.

No sooner did the Emperor Henry VI. of Germany learn the news of the arrest of Cœur-de-Lion than he sent to the Archduke of Austria, his vassal, commanding him to give up his prisoner. "A duke," said he, "has no right to imprison a king; that is the privilege only of an emperor." This strange proposition does not seem to have been denied by Leopold, who resigned the custody of the English king, on condition of receiving a portion of his ransom. The agreement having been concluded, Richard was removed from Vienna at Easter, 1193, and was confined in one of the imperial castles in Worms.

Before we follow further the fortunes of this adventurous king, it is necessary to go back to the period of his departure for the Holy Land, and to trace the course of events in England during his absence. The popular feeling which had been excited against the Jews at the time of Richard's coronation, and which he had done so little to repress, found vent in persecutions and massacres throughout the country. In those turbulent times there were among the people a certain number of lawless characters, who, ever eager for plunder, were doubly so when they could obtain it by means which were encouraged by their superiors, and permitted secretly, if not openly, by the clergy. To kill a Jew was regarded not only as no crime, but as a deed acceptable to God; and in England, as in Palestine, the pure and holy religion of peace was believed to give its sanction to acts of merciless bloodshed and plunder. In February, 1190, a number of Jews were butchered in the streets of Lynn, in Norfolk, and immediately afterwards, as though by a preconcerted movement, similar bloody scenes were enacted at Norwich, Lincoln, St. Edmundsbury, Stamford, and York.

The massacre of York, which took place in March, 1190, was remarkable no less for the number of victims who were sacrificed than for the circumstances of horror which attended it. At nightfall, on the 16th of the month, a company of strangers, armed to the teeth, entered the city, and attacked the house of a rich Jew who had been killed in London at the coronation. His widow and children, however, still remained, and these the ruffians put to the sword, carrying off whatever property the house contained. On the following day the rest of the Jews in York, anticipating the fate which awaited them, appeared before the governor, and entreated permission to seek safety for themselves and their families within the walls of the castle. The request was granted, and the people of the persecuted race, to the number of not less than 1,000 men, women, and children, were received into the fortress, within whose strong walls they might hope to find shelter from their enemies. But for some reason or other the governor passed outside the gates, and returned attended by a great number of the populace. The Jews, whose misfortunes had made them suspicious, feared that they had been permitted to enter the castle only as into a slaughter-house, and refused to admit the governor, excusing their disobedience by their dread of the mob, who, it was evident, would enter with him if the drawbridge were lowered. The governor refused to listen to such an argument, reasonable as it was; and, whatever may have been his original

RICHARD ASSAILED BY THE AUSTRIAN SOLDIERS. (*See p.* 236.)

intention, he now gave orders to the rabble to attack the rebellious Israelites. The command was willingly obeyed, and the populace, whose numbers were continually increased by all the vagabonds and ruffians of the neighbourhood, laid siege to the castle, and made preparations for taking it by assault. It is related that the governor became alarmed at the tumult he had raised, and that he recalled his order, and endeavoured to calm the excitement of the people; if so, his efforts were unsuccessful. Few things are easier than to rouse the passions of men—nothing more difficult than to quell them. The unhappy Jews heard the loud shouts of vengeance without the walls, and, foreseeing that they could make little or no defence against the force brought against them, set the place on fire, slew first their wives and children, and afterwards, with a few exceptions, themselves.

It has been already related that, before the departure of Richard for the Holy Land, he had sold the chief justiciarship of the kingdom to Hugh Pudsey, Bishop of Durham, whose authority he subsequently curtailed by appointing as rival justiciary William Longchamp, Bishop of Ely. Longchamp, who also held the chancellorship, and the custody of the Tower of London, was the favourite of Richard, and he soon secured into his own hands the entire government of the country. The king, who had the greatest confidence in his loyalty and ability, issued letters-patent, directing the people to obey him as their sovereign; and, by the authority of the Pope, the chancellor was also appointed legate of England and Ireland. Thus doubly armed with spiritual and temporal power, the rule of Longchamp was absolute throughout the kingdom.

Pudsey, however, had paid for the justiciarship, and was by no means disposed to see his privileges swept away without making an effort at resistance. He accordingly laid his complaint before the king, and Richard, in reply, sent him letters, authorising him to share with Longchamp the authority which was his due. Armed with these, Pudsey made his appearance in London with great ceremony, but the barons of the kingdom assembled there refused to permit him to take his seat among them. After having in vain insisted upon the king's authority which he carried with him, the discomfited bishop proceeded in search of the chancellor. When the two prelates met, Longchamp approached his brother of Durham with a smiling countenance and courteous demeanour, expressed himself ready to obey the commands of the king, and invited Pudsey to an entertainment on that day se'nnight in the castle of Tickhill. The Bishop of Durham, who possessed either more good faith or less shrewdness than is usual with statesmen in that or any other age, accepted the invitation; and as soon as he had passed the gates of the castle, Longchamp placed his hand on his shoulder and arrested him, saying, that as sure as the king lived, the bishop should not leave that place until he had surrendered, not only his claim to power, but all the castles in his possession. "This," said he, "is not bishop arresting bishop, but chancellor arresting chancellor." Pudsey was accordingly imprisoned, and was not released until he had fulfilled the required conditions.

The power of Longchamp was now employed to the utmost to raise money for the king's necessities, and to further his own schemes of aggrandisement. Among the chroniclers are several who speak in strong terms of his avarice and tyranny, while Peter of Blois alone has a good word to say for him. He, however, was an impartial witness, and an authority whose words carry considerable weight. Matthew Paris says that such was the rapacity of the chancellor that not a knight could keep his baldrick, not a woman her bracelet, not a noble his ring, not a Jew his hoards of gold or merchandise. He used his power to enrich his relations and friends, placing them in the highest and most profitable posts under government, and entrusting to them the custody of towns and castles, which he took from those who had previously held them. He passed through the country with all the pomp and parade of royalty, attended by more than a thousand horsemen; and it is related that whenever he stopped to lodge for the night, a three years' income was not enough to defray the expenses of his train for a single day. His taste for luxury was further ministered to by minstrels and jugglers, whom he invited from France, and who sang their strains of flattery in the public places, proclaiming that the chancellor had not his like in the world.

There is an evident air of exaggeration about these statements, and many of them were to be referred to men as disaffected towards the king as towards his chancellor. If Longchamp reduced the country to poverty by his exactions, it is most likely that he was impelled to obtain the money by the demands of Richard: we shall presently see, however, that the national wealth was by no means exhausted by the burdens—

heavy as they were—which it sustained. The loyalty of Longchamp has never been doubted, and there is no reason to believe that his government was generally tyrannous or unjust.

The nobles viewed the increasing power of the chancellor with feelings of envy; and Earl John, the brother of Richard, who had long entertained designs upon the throne, perceived that his chances of success were small indeed so long as a man devoted to the king retained the supreme power in the realm. Some of the turbulent barons, to whom Longchamp had given cause of offence, attached themselves to John, and encouraged him in his ambitious schemes. While Richard was in Sicily he received letters from his brother, containing various accusations against the chancellor of tyranny and misgovernment. It appears that these letters produced their effect, and that the king sent a reply directing that, if the accusations were proved to be true, Walter, Archbishop of Rouen, with Geoffrey Fitz-Peter and William Marshal, should be appointed to the chief justiciarships, and that in any case they should be associated with Longchamp in the direction of affairs. Richard, however, was well aware of the treacherous disposition of his brother, and reflection satisfied him that the chancellor was more worthy of confidence than those who accused him. Before the departure of the fleet from Messina, the king sent letters to his subjects confirming the authority of Longchamp, and directing that implicit obedience should be rendered to him.

When John learnt that his brother was on his way to Acre, he took active measures for bringing his schemes into operation. Various disputes took place between him and the chancellor, and before long an incident occurred which led to an open rupture between them. Gerald of Camville, a Norman baron, and one of the adherents of John, held the custody of Lincoln Castle, which he had purchased from the king. Longchamp—who, it is said, desired to give this office to one of his friends—summoned Camville to surrender the keys of the castle; but the baron refused compliance, saying that he was Earl John's liegeman, and that he would not relinquish his possessions except at the command of his lord. Longchamp then appeared before Lincoln with an army, and drove out Camville, who appealed to John for justice. The prince, who desired nothing better than such an opportunity, attacked the royal fortresses of Nottingham and Tickhill, carried them with little or no opposition, and, planting his standard on the walls, sent a messenger to Longchamp to the effect that, unless immediate restitution were made for the injury to Gerald of Camville, he would revenge it with a rod of iron. The chancellor, who possessed little courage or military talent, entered into a negotiation, by the terms of which the castles of Nottingham and Tickhill remained in the hands of John, and that of Lincoln was restored to Camville. Others of the royal castles, which had hitherto remained exclusively in the power of the chancellor, were committed into the custody of different barons, to be retained until the return of Richard from the Holy Land, or, in the event of his death, to be delivered up to John.

These important concessions satisfied John only for a short time, and an opportunity soon presented itself for pushing his demands further. Geoffrey, son of Henry II. by Fair Rosamond, had been appointed to the archbishopric of York during his father's lifetime, but his consecration had been delayed until the year 1191, when the necessary permission was received from the court of Rome, and he was consecrated by the Archbishop of Tours. As soon as the ceremony was concluded, he prepared to take possession of his benefice, notwithstanding the oath which had been exacted from him that he would not return to England. The chancellor having been apprised of his intention, sent a message to him forbidding him to cross the Channel, and at the same time directed the sheriffs to arrest him should he attempt to land. Geoffrey despised the prohibition; and, having landed at Dover in disguise, took shelter in a monastery. His retreat was soon discovered, and the soldiers of the king broke into the church, and seized the archbishop at the foot of the altar, while he was engaged in the celebration of the mass. A good deal of unnecessary violence seems to have been used, and Geoffrey was dragged through the streets to Dover Castle, where he was imprisoned.

The peculiar circumstances of this arrest, and the indignity thus inflicted upon a prelate of the Church, excited the popular feeling strongly against the government, and John, satisfied that he would be supported by the people, openly espoused the cause of his half-brother, and peremptorily ordered the chancellor to release him. Longchamp dared not resist the popular voice; he asserted that he had given no orders for the violence which had been used, and directed that the archbishop should be set at liberty, and suffered to go to London. An alliance, whose basis seems to have been self-interest rather than mutual esteem. was formed between the two half-brothers, and John, supported by the Archbishop of Rouen, who had been sent by Richard to England, boldly proceeded to London, summoned the great council of the barons of the kingdom, and called upon the chancellor to appear before it and defend his conduct. Longchamp not only refused to do so, but forbade the barons to assemble, declaring that the object of John was to usurp the crown. The council, however, was held at London Bridge, on the Thames, and the barons summoned Longchamp, who was then at Windsor Castle, to appear before them. The chancellor, on the contrary, collected all the men-at-arms who were with him, and marched from Windsor to London; but the adherents of John, who met him at the gates, attacked and defeated his escort; and finding himself also opposed by the citizens, he was compelled to take refuge in the Tower.

ARREST OF ARCHBISHOP GEOFFREY IN A MONASTERY AT DOVER. (*See p. 239.*)

Immediately afterwards John entered the city; and, on his promising to remain faithful to the king, was received with welcome. The people, though they were willing to join in deposing the chancellor, retained, almost without exception, the utmost loyalty to their brave sovereign, and showed clearly they would permit of no treason against his authority. The act contemplated by the barons involved very important consequences, and John, with the craft and caution peculiar to his character, determined to obtain the assent of the citizens of London, and thus to involve them in a portion of its responsibility. The suffrages of the people were taken in a manner which shows at once the rudeness of the times and the unusual nature of such a proceeding. On the day fixed for the great assembly of the barons, the tocsin, or alarm bell, was rung, and when the citizens poured forth from their houses, they found heralds posted in the streets, who directed them to St. Paul's Church. When the people arrived there in a crowd, they found the chief men of the realm—barons and prelates—seated in council. These haughty nobles, chiefly of Norman descent, whose usual custom had been to treat the native English as mere serfs and inferior beings, now received the people with extraordinary courtesy, and invited them to take part in the proceedings. The debate which followed, being conducted in Norman-French, must have been unintelligible to the majority of the citizens; but they were shown the king's seal affixed to a letter, which was said to authorise the deposition of the chancellor in case he failed to conduct properly the duties of his office. When this letter had been read, the votes of the whole assembly were taken, and it was decreed by the voice of "the bishops, earls, and barons of the kingdom, and of the citizens of London," that the chancellor should be deprived of his office, and that John, the brother of the king, should be proclaimed "chief governor of the whole kingdom."

SOUTH-WEST VIEW OF OLD ST. PAUL'S, SHOWING THE CHAPTER-HOUSE, ETC.

On the news of these transactions being conveyed to Longchamp, it is reported that he fell upon the floor insensible. It was evident that he had no longer any power to resist the pretensions of John: resistance, to have been of any avail, should have come sooner. The troops of his opponents having surrounded the Tower, the chancellor came out from the gates, and offered to surrender. John, who thought it worth while to buy his adhesion or submission to the new authority, proposed to leave him in possession of the bishopric of Ely, and to give him the custody of three castles belonging to the crown. To the honour of Longchamp, he refused to accept gifts from such a source, or to resign of his own free will any of the powers entrusted to him by his sovereign. "I submit," he said, "only to the superior force which is brought against me." And with these words he gave the keys of the Tower into the hands of John. The barons, however, compelled him to take an oath that he would surrender the keys of the other royal fortresses, and his two brothers were detained as hostages for the performance of these conditions.

The ex-chancellor himself was permitted to go at large; and it appears that he determined, rather than resign possession of the castles, to leave his brothers in danger, and to escape to Normandy. Having reached Canterbury, he stayed there for a few days, and then quitted the town in the disguise of a hawking woman, having a bale of linen under his arm and a yard-measure in his hand. In this strange costume, the ex-chancellor, who had been accustomed to travel with a retinue of 1,000 men-at-arms, took his way on foot to the sea-shore. Having to wait a while for a vessel in which to embark, he sat down upon a stone with his veil, or hood, drawn over his face. Some fishermen's wives who were passing by stopped and asked him the price of his cloth, but as he did not understand a word of English, he made no answer, much to the surprise of his questioners. Presently some other women came up to him, who also took an interest in his merchandise, and desired to know how he sold it. The prelate, who was keenly alive to the ludicrousness of his situation, burst out into a loud laugh, which stimulated the curiosity of the women, and they suddenly lifted his veil. Seeing under it, as Roger of Hoveden hath it, "the dark and newly-shaven face of a man," they ran away in alarm, and soon brought back with them a number of men and women, who amused themselves by pulling the clothes of this strange person, and rolling him in the shingle. At length, after the ex-chancellor had tried in vain to make them understand who he was, they shut him up in a cellar, and he was compelled to make himself known to the authorities as the only way of regaining his liberty. He then gave up the keys of the royal castles, and was permitted to proceed to the Continent.

Immediately on his arrival in Normandy, Longchamp wrote those letters to Richard which reached him in the Holy Land, and apprised him of the unsettled condition of affairs in England, and of the dangerous assumption of power on the part of John. This prince had appointed the Archbishop of Rouen to the chief justiciarship of the kingdom; but it would appear that the new justiciary was too honest a man to assent to all the views of his unprincipled master; and John being in want of money, entered into a negotiation with Longchamp to replace him in his office for a payment of £700. The chief ministers, however, dreading the consequences which might follow the return of the ex-chancellor to power, agreed to lend John a sum of £500 from the treasury, to induce him to withdraw his proposal. The mercenary prince consented to do so, and the negotiation was broken off.

In defiance of the solemn oath which Philip had taken before leaving the Holy Land, he no sooner returned to France than he prepared to invade Normandy. Some of the nobles of his kingdom, however, had more regard for their knightly faith, and they refused to join in the expedition; while the Pope, determined to defend the cause of a king who was so nobly fighting the battle of the faith, threatened Philip with the ban of the Church if he persisted in his treacherous intention. Compelled to abandon this expedition, the French king by no means gave up his designs against Richard, and he entered into a treaty with John, by which he promised to secure to him the possession of Normandy, Aquitaine, and Anjou, and to assist him in his attempts upon the English throne. In return he merely asked that John should marry the Princess Alice, Philip's sister.

To this match John, who probably might have been willing to promise anything that was required of him, did not hesitate to give his consent, in spite of the sinister rumours which were current about the princess, and the fact that she had been affianced to his brother.

As time passed on, and the king still remained absent, strange stories began to get abroad. It was affirmed that he had been driven on the coast of Barbary, and taken prisoner by the Moors; that, like Robert of Normandy, he had been tempted to stay for a while among the groves of Italy; that the ship which carried him had foundered at sea with all on board. The last story, however, found few believers, for the people, imbued with a tinge of that romance which taught the immortality of the hero, were fully convinced that their king was still alive, and would some day return to take possession of the throne. At length it became known that Cœur-de-Lion was in imprisonment in one of the castles of Germany. The news was first conveyed in a letter from the Emperor Henry to King Philip, and quickly travelled over Europe. To the revengeful and ungenerous King of France that letter brought more joy than a present of gold and topaz; but the other nations of Christendom received the tidings with indignation and disgust. The Pope instantly excommunicated the Archduke of Austria, and sent a message to the Emperor Henry, to the effect that he too should be placed under the curse of Rome unless the royal prisoner were instantly released. The Archbishop of Rouen proved his loyalty by summoning the council of the kingdom, and sending two abbots into Germany to visit the king, and confer with him on the measures to be taken for his liberation. Longchamp, however, had already departed in search of his master, and was the first who obtained an interview with him.

There is a beautiful legend, much better known than the authenticated facts, which tells of a minstrel, named Blondel, who had been attached to the person of Richard, and whose love for his master induced him to travel through Germany for the purpose of discovering the place of his confinement. Whenever he came to a castle the minstrel placed himself under the walls, and sang a song which had been a favourite with Cœur-de-Lion. One day when the king was whiling away the dreary hours in solitude, he heard the sound of a harp beneath his window, and when the well-known strains floated up to his ears, he joined in the air, and sang the concluding verse of the song. Blondel immediately recognised the voice, and thus the place of Cœur-de-Lion's imprisonment became known to his countrymen. Such is the story, which has been generally rejected by the historians for want of evidence. There is considerable improbability in the legend, but, at the same time, it is not impossible that it may have had a foundation in fact. It has been argued that Richard's imprisonment was related in the letter of the emperor to Philip, and that therefore there was no need for the journey of Blondel; but although the locality of the king's prison was indicated in this letter, it by no means follows that it was known to Longchamp and others who first took steps to visit him. When at length Longchamp obtained admission into his prison, Richard received him as a friend, and appears to have entirely forgiven that weakness and lack of energy on the part of the chancellor which had proved so favourable to the traitorous designs of Prince John.

Longchamp exerted himself in his master's favour with the Emperor Henry, and that prince at length consented that Richard should appear before the Diet at Hagenau. When the king was on his way thither he was met by the two abbots who had been sent by the Archbishop of Rouen. "Unbroken by distress," Cœur-de-Lion received them with a smiling countenance, and the admiration of all the bystanders was attracted by his undaunted bearing, which was rather that of a conqueror than a prisoner. Within a few days afterwards he appeared before the Diet of the Empire, where he was permitted to offer his defence against the accusations of Henry. These were: that he had entered into an alliance with Tancred, the usurper of the crown of Sicily; that he had unjustly imprisoned the Christian ruler of Cyprus; that he had insulted the Duke of Austria; and that he was guilty of the murder of Conrad of Montferrat. It was also alleged that the truce he had entered into with Saladin was disgraceful, and that he had left Jerusalem in the hands of the infidels. The speech of Richard in reply to these charges has not been preserved, but contemporary writers describe it as having been full of manly eloquence, and assert that its effect on the assembly was entirely to establish in their minds the conviction of his innocence. The emperor, however, was by no means disposed to set his prisoner at liberty, and insisted upon a heavy ransom, which was subsequently raised to the large sum of 100,000 marks. It was also stipulated that Richard should give hostages to the emperor and the Duke of Austria for the further payment of 50,000 marks, which was to be made under certain conditions; and that Eleanor, the maid of Brittany, sister to Prince Arthur, and niece of Richard, should be affianced to the son of Leopold. It is related by Hoveden that Richard did homage to the emperor for the crown of England. This act of vassalage, if it really took place, was but an acknowledgment of the pretensions of the ancient emperors of Germany to the feudal superiority of Europe as heirs of the Roman Cæsars.

When the first news of Richard's imprisonment reached England, John collected a body of troops, and took possession of the castles of Windsor and Wallingford. Thence he marched to London, causing it to be proclaimed wherever he went that the king his brother had died in prison. The people refused to believe this report, and when John required the barons of England and Normandy to acknowledge him as their sovereign, they answered by raising the standard of Cœur-de-Lion. The troops of John were attacked and put to flight, and the prince himself passed across the Channel, and joined his ally, Philip of France. Philip then entered Normandy with a large army, but there, as in England, the people remained loyal to their sovereign, and the French king was compelled to retreat with heavy loss.

GREAT SEAL OF RICHARD I.

The ransom of Richard, which was obtained almost wholly in England, appears to have been raised with great difficulty. The officers of the crown went through the country, compelling men of all ranks to contribute, making no distinction between clergy and laity, Saxons or Normans. The plate of the churches and monasteries was melted down into coin and bullion, and the Cistercian monks, whose poverty had usually exempted them from such exactions, were forced to give up the wool of their sheep. Frauds were practised to a considerable extent by the officers, who exacted money for their own use under the pretence of applying it to the king's ransom; and thus the already grievous burdens of the people increased to such an extent, that they were said to be in dire distress from sea to sea.

At length, after much delay, the sum of 70,000 marks was raised and sent to the emperor, who paid over one-third of the sum to the Archduke of Austria as his share of the booty. It was then agreed that Richard should be set at liberty, on condition of his leaving hostages for the payment of the sum in arrear. The king, whose captivity had now endured for thirteen months, was disposed to agree to almost any terms that might be demanded of him; and the hostages having been obtained, he was released about the end of January, 1194.

Attended by a few followers, Richard left Antwerp in a small vessel, and landed at Sandwich on the 13th of March, 1194. The English people had paid heavily for his freedom, but he seemed to have become more endeared to them on that account. Impulsive and enthusiastic then as now, they crowded about him with uproarious welcome, and accompanied him on his way to London with shouts of rejoicing. The injuries inflicted by the Norman conquest were beginning to disappear from their minds; and though Cœur-de-Lion could not speak their language, he was their king, and his exploits were a national honour. London, at least, was not impoverished by the sums raised for his ransom. So magnificent was the reception given by the citizens—such stores of plate, and jewels, and cloth of gold were displayed, to do honour to the occasion—that one of the German barons who went with him expressed his astonishment at the sight, and said that if the emperor his master had known the wealth of the country, he would not have let his prisoner off so easily,

RECEPTION OF RICHARD ON HIS RETURN FROM THE CONTINENT. (*See p. 244.*)

At the moment when Richard entered London, bells were ringing at the churches, tapers were lit, and at every altar in the city sentence of excommunication was pronounced, by order of the bishops, against Prince John and his adherents.

John himself had received timely notice of the release of Richard by a letter which reached him from Philip, containing the significant words, "Take care of yourself—the devil is broken loose"; and the Prince immediately sought safety in flight. At a council held at Nottingham, the barons summoned him to appear within forty days, on pain of the forfeiture of all his estates; they also determined that Richard should be crowned a second time, and though the king was opposed to this extraordinary proceeding, he submitted to a decision which was evidently dictated by loyalty. The ceremony was performed at Winchester on Easter Day following.

On the return of King Richard to London, and immediately after his second coronation, he commenced preparations for a war in France, which he proposed to undertake in revenge for the injuries he had sustained at the hands of Philip. For this purpose, as well as for his own necessities, money was required, and Richard showed no scruple as to the means by which it was obtained. He at once annulled the sales of royal estates which he had made before his departure for the Holy Land, declaring that they had not been sold, but mortgaged, and that the crown was entitled to their restitution; many important appointments were also resumed in the same manner, and these, as well as the lands, were again sold to the highest bidder.

Impatient to take the field, Richard collected as many troops as could be got together, and passed over into Normandy in May, 1194. He landed at Harfleur, and as soon as he had set foot upon the beach he was met by his cowardly brother John, who crouched at his feet and begged forgiveness. His mother, Queen Eleanor, seconded the request with her prayers; and Richard on this occasion showed a magnanimity which was rare indeed in those days. He granted his brother's pardon, and said, "I forgive him; and I hope to forget his injuries as easily as he will forget my pardon." The prince who thus knelt trembling on the beach at Harfleur, had just been guilty of a most foul and treacherous murder. Regardless of the oath he had taken, he determined to desert the cause of Philip, whom he feared less than his brother; before doing so he invited the officers of the garrison placed by the French king at Evreux to an entertainment, and massacred them all without mercy.

The expedition of Richard, hastily undertaken, was attended with only partial success. The French troops were beaten in several engagements, and several towns and castles of Normandy which had been occupied by them were retaken by Cœur-de-Lion; but his finances were soon exhausted, and the people of Aquitaine broke out into insurrection against him. The campaign came to an end in July by a truce for one year.

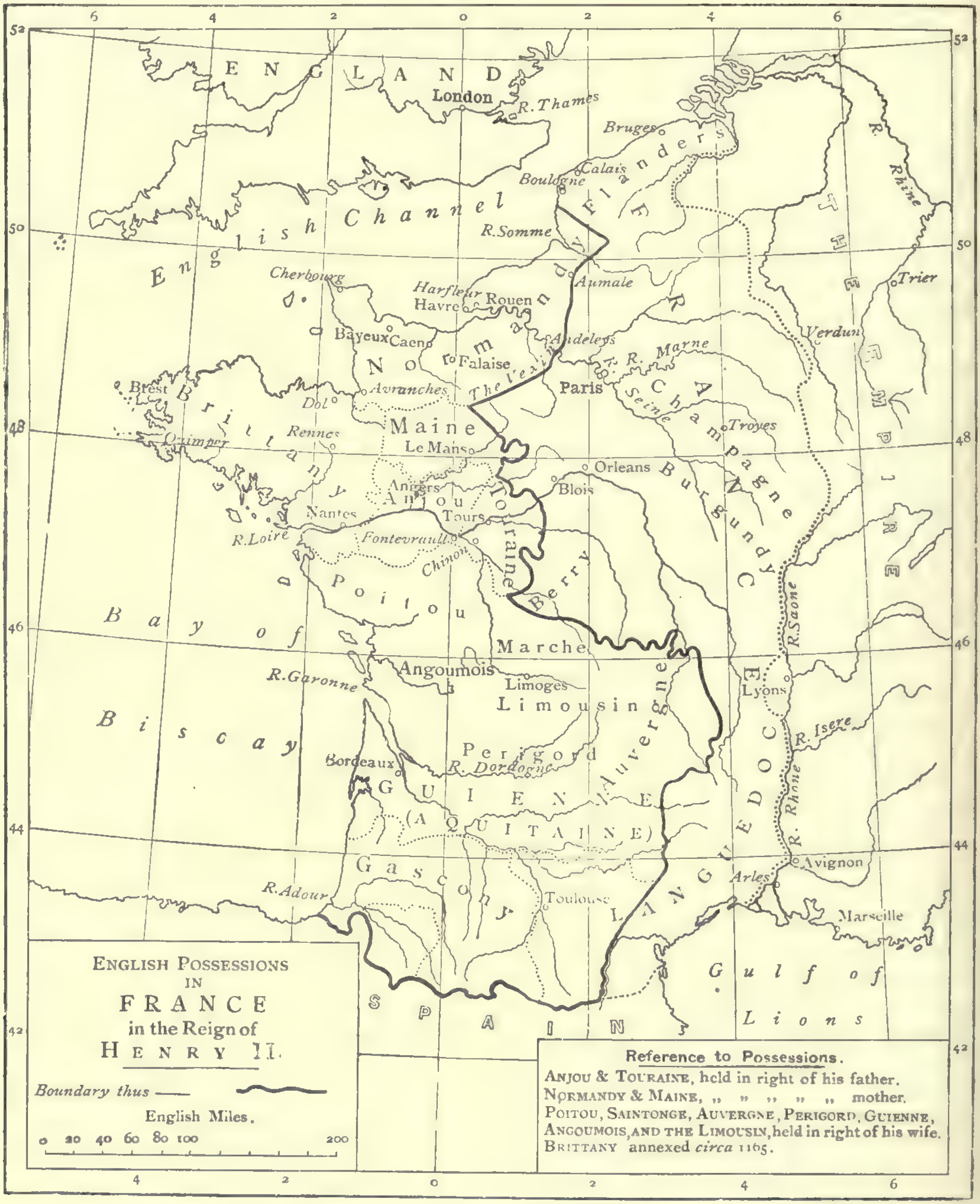
While Richard was absent on the Continent the government of England was confided to Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury, who was appointed chief justiciary of the kingdom (1195). As Bishop of Salisbury he had accompanied the king to Palestine, and had there shown great courage and ability, as well in the field of battle as in his interview with Saladin. Cœur-de-Lion knew both how to appreciate and reward the ability shown in his service; great men seldom choose bad instruments, and the new justiciary proved himself fully worthy of the trust reposed in him. Under his administration the country began to recover from its depressed condition, although the constant demands for money made by the king rendered it difficult to relax, in any great degree, the burdens of the people. Hubert, however, appears to have promoted their well-being to the utmost of his power; the taxes were raised with as little violence as possible; commerce was fostered, and justice equitably administered in the courts of law.

Before the truce between Richard and Philip had expired, war again broke out, and continued without any important advantage to either side, until the end of the year, when a temporary peace was once more concluded. The citizens of London had for some time complained of the unequal manner in which the taxes were levied, the poor being made to pay much more in proportion to their means than the rich. In the year 1195 the movement took a new form, headed by a man named William Fitz-Osbert, called "Longbeard," from the length of the beard which he wore to make himself look like a true Englishman. His first act, which showed no sign of disloyalty, was to visit Richard in Normandy, and lay before him the grievance of which the people complained. The king made a courteous reply, and promised that the matter should be inquired into. Months passed away, however, without any redress being obtained, and in 1196 Longbeard formed a secret association, which was said to number 52,000 persons, all of whom swore to obey the "Saviour of the Poor," as he was called. Frequent assemblies of the citizens took place at St. Paul's Cross, where their leader delivered political orations, couched in obscure language, and usually prefaced by some text from Scripture. The passions of the people were becoming daily more excited, and it was evident that these meetings could not go on without danger to the public peace. Longbeard was summoned to appear before a council composed of the barons and higher ecclesiastics, where the strange accusation was brought against him that he had excited among the lower classes of the people the love of liberty and happiness. He attended the council, but so large a concourse of his adherents escorted him there, that it was not considered prudent to take proceedings against him. Great efforts were made to counteract the effects of his teaching, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose virtues were recognised and respected by all classes, went personally among the poorest of the citizens, and prevailed upon many of them to give their promise to keep the peace, and to deliver their children into his hands as hostages for their good faith. Two citizens now presented themselves to the council, and since it was dangerous to arrest Longbeard openly, offered to take him by surprise. The offer was accepted, and these men were employed to dog his footsteps, and watch an opportunity of seizing him. At length they found him with only a few companions, and having called to their assistance some armed men whom they had in readiness, they advanced and laid hands upon him. Longbeard immediately drew a knife and stabbed one of them to the heart; then with his companions he effected his escape to the Church of St. Mary-le-Bow, in the tower of which he barricaded himself. Here for several days he maintained his position, but at length the tower was set on fire, and Longbeard and his friends were driven out by the flames. They were immediately seized and bound, but at that moment a youth, the son of the citizen who was killed, approached Longbeard, and plunged a knife into his bowels. The wound did not cause death, and the soldiers—to whom pity would seem to have been unknown—tied the wounded man to the tail of a horse, and dragged him in this manner to the Tower of London, whence, by sentence of the chief justiciary, he was taken to West Smithfield, and was there hanged, together with his companions.

During this cruel torture of their leader the citizens remained passive, making no attempt to rescue him; and yet no sooner was he dead than they proclaimed him to be a saint and a martyr, and cut up the gibbet on which he was hanged into relics, which were preserved with a religious veneration. The fame of the "Saviour of the Poor" had travelled far and wide, and the peasantry from remote parts of the kingdom made pilgrimages to Smithfield, in the belief that miracles would be wrought on the spot where he fell. So great was the popular enthusiasm that it became necessary to maintain a guard of soldiers on the spot, and some of the more troublesome pilgrims were imprisoned and scourged. Even these severe measures were only successful after a considerable lapse of time, so enthusiastic were the people in their attachment to the memory of one whom they believed to have died in their cause, but whom in his death-agony they raised no arm to save.

In the year 1197 hostilities again commenced between Richard and Philip, the latter of whom derived support from the disaffection of the English king's Continental subjects. The people of Brittany—ever impetuous and eager for liberty—joined the standard of Philip, or fought separately against his enemy, without reflecting that their efforts, if successful, would tend only to a change of masters, and not to establishing their independence. The men of Aquitaine had risen in insurrection. The Count of Flanders in the north, and the Count of Toulouse in the south, simultaneously declared war against Richard, and raised large bodies of troops in their territories. The war continued in a desultory manner, fortune leaning now to this side, now to that; but wherever Cœur-de-Lion showed himself in person he maintained his reputation, and overcame his opponents. The king ultimately secured the adherence of the Count of Toulouse, by giving him the hand of his sister Joan, the Queen Dowager of Sicily, who, with the Queen Berengaria, had returned to Aquitaine.

In this campaign the Bishop of Beauvais, a powerful prelate, who had evinced great enmity to Richard, was captured by Mercadi, a captain of the Brabanters in the king's service. He was taken in complete armour, fighting sword in hand, contrary to the canons of the Church. By direction of Richard he was consigned to a dungeon in the castle of Rouen. Two of his priests presented themselves before the king to beg that their bishop might no longer be subjected to such harsh treatment. Richard replied that



MAP OF THE ENGLISH POSSESSIONS IN FRANCE (1189).

they themselves should judge if he deserved it. "This man," said he, "has done me many wrongs, one of which is not to be forgotten. When I was a prisoner, in the hands of the emperor, and when, in consideration of my royal birth, they began to treat me with some little respect, your master arrived, and used his influence to my injury. He spoke to the emperor over-night, and the next morning I was made to wear a chain such as a horse could hardly bear. Say, now, what he merits at my hands, and answer justly." The priests are said to have made no reply, and quitted the royal presence. Efforts were then made in a more influential quarter on behalf of the bishop. He appealed to Pope Celestine, who replied that in such a case he could not use his pontifical authority, but would address his request to Richard as a friend. He did so, and sent the king a letter, in which he implored mercy for his "dear son, the Bishop of Beauvais." Richard replied by sending to the Pope the bishop's coat of mail, which was covered with blood, and attaching to it a scroll containing the following verse from the Old Testament—"This have we found; know now whether it be thy son's coat or no?" Celestine, who appears to have relished the joke, replied, "No; it is the coat of a son of Mars. Let Mars deliver him if he can." On this occasion Richard proved implacable; he refused the large sum of 10,000 marks which was offered as a ransom; and until the king's death the Bishop of Beauvais remained in the dungeon in chains.

In the following year (1198) the truce again expired, and war broke out once more, and for the last time between the two kings. The prolonged contest seemed to have increased their hatred, and led them to wreak their vengeance upon the unhappy prisoners who fell into their hands. Great cruelties were practised by both armies, who, as they passed through their enemy's territory, burned up the homesteads of the people, and laid waste the fields. A pitched battle took place near Gisors, in which Richard obtained a complete victory, and Philip, in his retreat, had a narrow escape from drowning in the river Epte, the bridge over which he crossed breaking down under the weight of his troops. Richard then exclaimed exultingly that he had made the French king drink deeply of the waters of the Epte. During the engagement Cœur-de-Lion exhibited all his old prowess. It is related that he rode unattended against three knights, whom he struck down one after the other and made prisoners. This was Cœur-de-Lion's last exploit in the field. A truce was declared between the obstinate belligerents, and was solemnly ratified for the term of five years. In those times an oath of truce or a kingly pledge was little else than a ceremony, and passion or self-interest continually broke down the most solemn vows and attestations. Thus the truce for five years was infringed in as many weeks; but the difference was a trivial one, and was concluded without

BERTRAND IN PRESENCE OF RICHARD. (*See p. 250.*)

further hostilities. Richard then marched a body of troops against the insurgents of Aquitaine.

For some time previously the minstrels of the south had been heard to introduce among their love-songs a ballad of more gloomy portent. This ballad contained a prophecy that in Limousin an arrow was making by which the tyrant King of England should die. Such proved to be, indeed, the manner of Richard's death, and the previous existence of the prophecy would appear to indicate a conspiracy to assassinate him. These were the men who, as already related, had attempted the life of Henry II., by shooting arrows at him; and it is not improbable that they should have determined among themselves to get rid of his son in the same manner. The circumstances of Richard's death, however, seem to have had no connection with such a conspiracy; it was provoked by his own spirit of revenge, and by the reckless indifference with which he exposed himself to danger. The story most commonly received is to the following effect:—Vidomar, the Count of Limoges, had found a considerable treasure, which Richard, as his feudal lord, demanded. The count offered one-half, and no more; and the king, who wanted money, and seldom listened to argument in such cases, besieged the rebellious noble in his castle of Chaluz. Famine soon appeared among the garrison, and they sent to the king to tender their submission, on the condition only that their lives might be spared. Richard refused the request, and swore he would storm the castle and hang the whole garrison on the battlements. The unhappy men of Chaluz had received this reply, which seemed to cut them off from hope, and they were consulting together with despairing looks when they observed the king, attended by Mercadi, approaching the castle walls to reconnoitre and determine where the attack should be made. A youth named Bertrand de Gourdon, who stood upon the ramparts, then took a bow, and directing an arrow at the king, lodged it in his left shoulder. The castle was then carried by assault, and the whole of the garrison were massacred, except Bertrand, who was led into the presence of Richard, to learn the more horrible fate which it was supposed would await him. Meanwhile, the arrow-head had been extracted with great difficulty by the surgeon, and it was evident that the wound would prove mortal. In the presence of death none but the most depraved minds retain their animosities; and the dying king looked calmly on his murderer, while the youth, for his part, bore an undaunted brow. "What have I done to thee," Cœur-de-Lion said, "that thou shouldst seek my life?" The youth answered, "Thou hast killed with thine own hand my father and my two brothers, and myself thou wouldst hang. Let me die in torture, if thou wilt; I care not, so that thou, the tyrant, diest with me." Such a speech found an echo in the breast of him of the Lion-Heart: "Youth," he said, "I forgive thee. Let him go free, and give him a hundred shillings." The command was not obeyed, for it is related that Mercadi retained the prisoner, and after the king's death caused him to be flayed alive, and then to be hanged. Like others of the princes, his contemporaries, Richard expressed contrition and remorse at the prospect of death, and in his last moments courted the offices of the Church. He died on the 6th of April, 1199, at the age of forty-two, having reigned, or rather worn the crown, for nearly ten years; during which, with the exception of a few months, he was absent from England. He had no children to succeed to the throne, and he left a will, in which he appointed his successor, and gave directions as to the disposal of his remains. "Take my heart," he said, "to Rouen, and let my body lie at my father's feet in the abbey of Fontevrault."

Richard Cœur-de-Lion appears to us as the type of manhood unfettered by a high civilisation—a strong, passionate heart, with great capacities for good or evil, placed above the control of ordinary circumstances, little influenced by the power of religion, and therefore left in a large measure to its own native impulses. Richard was revengeful, but not implacable; passionate, but not vindictive. The story of his life, like that of other kings of the Plantagenet race, cannot be written without the record of many acts of cruelty, which there is little to excuse or palliate. If he wanted money he seized it wherever it was to be had, with or without pretext; if a man opposed him, he crushed him down or hanged him without scruple. When, on his return from captivity, the garrison of Nottingham held out against his troops, doubting the report of his return, it was not until the prisoners taken by the besiegers were hung up before the castle walls that the rebels became convinced of their error, and realised that the king was there. Absolute power is unfitted for human nature; and since the beginning of the world no man has ever wielded it without blame. But if Cœur-de-Lion was not free from the crimes belonging to his age and kingly position, he surpassed his contemporaries as much in nobility of character, as in bodily strength and valour. His courage was of the highest order; for it combined not only the dash and gallantry common to men whose physical organisation is perfect, and who are incited by the love of military fame, but also that calmer, but not less admirable, quality of fortitude, which sustains the heart of the prisoner in chains, or of the soldier in time of famine and disease. The business of his life was war, and its recreation the tournament or the chase. Then, if ever, were the days of chivalry as they are depicted by the poets—stormy and perilous days, when the pulse of life beat high, and there was enough of intellectual culture to show men how to use their passions, but not to restrain them.

It has been said by a modern historian that the character of Richard was described by the Normans in one word, when they called him *Cœur-de-Lion*, or the Lion-Heart, but that the tiger might with more fitness have been taken as his prototype. Such an opinion does not appear to be warranted by the facts. To say that Richard was guilty of acts which we now stamp as cruel and tyrannous, is but to say that he was possessed of power, and lived in the twelfth century; but to intimate that his whole life was a course of such acts, is to violate historical justice. This terrible warrior-king had his moments of gentleness, and more than once displayed a magnanimity which, under all the circumstances, must excite our high admiration. If he was false to his wife, as appears to have been the case, his vices of that kind were less conspicuous than those of his predecessors. If he struck down his enemies without pity, he at least used no treachery for that purpose. Whatever he did he dared to do openly, and would have disdained to use intrigues like those which disgraced the sovereigns of France and Germany. Without searching the records of his reign for isolated instances of virtue, we may believe that many noble qualities must have been possessed by the man who could attach his friends and attendants so warmly to himself, and excite in the breasts of his people—ground down as they were by his exactions—such strong sentiments of loyalty and admiration. The great fault in his character is his complete indifference to England and the welfare of his subjects.

CHAPTER XXIII.

JOHN AND THE GREAT CHARTER.

Accession of John—His Position—Arthur of Brittany—Peace between John and Philip of France—John's Marriage with Isabella of La Marche—Rupture with France—The Struggle Begins Capture of Arthur—The Stories of his Death—The Loss of Normandy—Peace with Philip—Quarrel with the Pope—The Kingdom Laid Under an Interdict, and Excommunication of John—John's Desperate Measures—Expedition to Ireland—John is Deposed—Arrival of Pandulph in England—Surrender of the Kingdom to the Pope Successes of John—Langton Arrives in England—He Becomes Leader of the Baronial Party—The Battle of Bouvines—Insurrection in England—The Barons Confront John—His Intrigues—Meeting at Brackley—Occupation of London—The Meeting at Runnymede—Greatness of the Occasion—Provisions of the Charter—Duplicity of John—Siege of Rochester—John in the North—His Cause Supported by the Church—The Crown offered to Louis of France—He Enters London—Sieges of Dover and Windsor—Reported Conspiracy—John's Disaster at the Wash—His Death and Character.

When the news of the death of Richard I. was conveyed to his brother John, he immediately took measures for obtaining possession of the throne. This degenerate son of the house of Plantagenet recovered his courage when he had only a child to oppose his ambitious schemes—for the young Arthur, son of his elder brother Geoffrey, was not yet twelve years old. John, who knew well how little popularity he possessed in England, sent to secure the services of the foreign mercenaries who had been in the army of Richard, offering them a greatly increased rate of pay, and promising to their leaders profitable appointments. Being then in Normandy, he dispatched William Marshal and Hubert Walter, the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose adherence he had obtained, into England, to further his claims, and prepare the way for his coming. Meanwhile, he presented himself before the castle of Chinon, and demanded possession of his brother's treasure, which was there deposited. No opposition was made to him in that neighbourhood, and the Governor of Chinon, as well as the Governors of other strongholds, opened their gates at his bidding. Not so the Lords of Touraine, Anjou, and Maine, who joined the Bretons in supporting the claims of their young prince Arthur, and raised the standard of revolt. John caused himself to be crowned at Rouen as Duke of Normandy, and having wreaked his vengeance on the citizens of Le Mans for having refused him their allegiance, he crossed the Channel, and landed at Shoreham on the 25th of May, 1199, six weeks after his brother's death.

When Hubert of Canterbury and William Marshal arrived in England, they caused proclamation to be made throughout the kingdom, calling upon all the earls, barons, and owners of land to render fealty to John, Duke of Normandy, son of King Henry, son of the Empress Matilda. Whatever may have been the motives which first induced Hubert to espouse the cause of John, it will scarcely be denied that the archbishop was justified in putting an end to the state of uncertainty by any means in his power. It has been already stated that Hubert Walter was a man of very high abilities, and these he now exerted to the utmost, and with remarkable success. Having summoned a council of the barons and prelates at Nottingham, he used all his eloquence to overcome the disaffection of the assembly, while to arguments were added secret gifts and lavish promises in the name of John. These inducements prevailed, and the barons there present took the oath of allegiance.

Immediately after the landing of John, he proceeded to the church of St. Peter, at Westminster, there to prefer formally his claim to the crown. He carried with him a document, signed by Richard on his death-bed, in which no allusion was made to the claims of Arthur, but John was appointed unreservedly as the successor to the throne. Archbishop Hubert was well aware that, according to the laws of primogeniture, Arthur, as the only son of an elder brother, had an undoubted right to the succession; the prelate, therefore, in addressing the people assembled in the church, is said to have insisted upon the elective character of the monarchy, and that no man could be entitled to the crown unless he were chosen by the nation. He asserted that John had already been so chosen at the council held at Nottingham, and that there was no one of the family of the dead king better fitted to assume the regal dignity. He declared that John possessed those meritorious qualities which had belonged to King Richard—a statement which it would have been difficult to prove—and that for these reasons, as well as for having the same lineage, he was elected king. Whatever may have been the real temper of the assembly, no opposition was made to these statements, and the English crown was conferred upon the most vicious and worthless prince who ever wore it.

The new king began his reign amidst the disaffection, if not the hatred, of the people, while he was menaced on every side by the attacks of enemies from without. In the north, William the Lion, King of Scotland, was preparing to invade his territories; while on the Continent, all his vassals, except those of Normandy, were in insurrection, and the French king, his former ally, had declared war against him. The aspect of affairs was highly favourable to the designs of Philip, who, to further his own ends, declared himself in favour of the cause of the young Arthur. John, having sent an army under the command of William de Stuteville to oppose the Scottish king, passed over into Normandy. Negotiations were then entered into by Philip, who demanded that all the Continental provinces subject to England, with the exception of Normandy, should be given up to Arthur, and that a large portion of Normandy should be resigned to the French crown. Such terms could not be accepted, and the war continued.

The young prince, whose claims to the English throne gave rise to so much bloodshed and revolution, appeared to have been marked for misfortune from his birth. He was a posthumous child, his father, Geoffrey, Duke of Brittany, second son of Henry II., having been killed in a tournament several months before Arthur came into the world. The Bretons, who were perpetually struggling for independence against the overwhelming force of France on the one hand, and of England on the other, hailed the birth of their native prince with enthusiastic joy, and when his grandfather desired to give him the name of Henry, they one and all insisted that he should be called Arthur—a name which was held in as much honour by them as among their kindred, the Bretons of Wales. The latter people, who held tenaciously by their ancient traditions handed down by the bards from generation to generation, believed firmly that they were destined once more to possess the whole island of Britain. The confidence they expressed in this wild hope, opposed as it was to all probability, caused them to be regarded both in England and

France as having the gift of prophecy. The songs of their ancient poets, imaginative and obscure, were supposed to possess a hidden meaning which was traced in the political events occurrin many years afterwards. Hence arose the strange stories related of Myrddin, a Cambrian bard of the seventh century, who, after a lapse of five hundred years, had become celebrated under the name of the enchanter Merlin. To this source, also, is to be attributed the extraordinary fame of King Arthur, of whose existence no authentic records remain, but to whom the glowing imaginations of the Welsh poets attributed superhuman valour and virtues. The writings of that people, when translated into the languages of the Continent, were read with avidity. The troubadours of Provence completed the picture drawn by the Welsh, and from the shadowy outline furnished by tradition, produced that vigorous portraiture of a perfect knight, which became celebrated throughout Europe. The Welsh placed the most entire confidence in the prediction of Merlin, that King Arthur would return to them and restore their ancient glory; and this belief was shared by the Bretons of the Continent. These were the reasons which induced the latter people to call their young chief by the name of Arthur; and as the child grew in strength and beauty, they hoped to see the day when their independence should be restored through him, and he should rule them without the control of French or English.

JOHN.

While the Bretons were fighting against Richard I., Constance, the mother of Arthur, relinquished their support, and carried her son first to the court of Richard, and then to that of the King of France. When John ascended the throne, Arthur was placed under the protection of Philip, to whom the boy-prince was made to surrender the independence of Brittany, Maine, Touraine, and Anjou, by acknowledging him as feudal suzerain of those provinces. Constance was a woman of little virtue, and seems to have cared more about the prosecution of her own intrigues than the welfare and safety of her child. The Bretons, headed by William Desroches, firmly maintained the attitude they had assumed; while John, with his army of mercenaries, advanced upon their lands, spreading ruin and devastation around him—burning the villages, and selling the inhabitants as slaves. Philip marched a body of troops to the assistance of Desroches, took possession of several towns of Brittany, and seized some castles on the frontiers belonging to the English.

He, by way of securing Arthur for the future, conferred upon him the honour of knighthood, and even promised him the hand of his daughter Mary in marriage. This friendly attitude, however, did not exist long. Philip soon perceived that it was impossible to retain possession of his new territories, so long as he was opposed by the inhabitants themselves on the one hand, and the arms of the King of England on the other. He therefore determined to arrange a peace with John, and for that purpose he completely sacrificed the interests of the young prince, to whom he had so lately promised an alliance with himself. By a treaty concluded in the following year (1200) between the two kings, it was agreed that John should retain possession of all the provinces held by his father, and Arthur was compelled to do homage to his uncle for Anjou, Brittany, and Maine. In return John did homage to Philip for his French possessions. The treaty was cemented by a marriage alliance; John promising to young Louis, the French king's heir, the hand of his niece, Blanche of Castille.

In spite of the act which thus deprived young Arthur of his inheritance, he remained at the French court, where Philip retained him, to be brought forward in case of any new cause of offence on the part of John. It was not long before such an occurrence took place. With the exception of Normandy, the only province under the Anglo-Norman rule which refrained from open rebellion against John was that of Aquitaine. Peace had been maintained there chiefly by the influence of Queen Eleanor, who was the representative of the ancient lords of the province, and to whose person the people had always shown great attachment. In the summer of the year 1200 John made a progress through this part of his dominions, and, by the pomp and parade with which he appeared, had a favourable effect upon the lively and impressible children of the south. On this occasion John, who was a tolerably good actor, exerted all his powers to obtain popularity, and strove to hide his naturally tyrannical and vindictive temper under a smiling face and affable manner. It appears that he was only partially successful. He had not sufficient patience or self-control to continue long this kind of deceit, and on some trifling provocation his real character would display itself. He was already married, and had been so for ten years, to Hadwisa, daughter of the Earl of Gloucester, a gentle and amiable woman; but John was as remarkable for licentiousness as for cruelty, and his passions were under no restraint, except from his fears. At the time of his visit to Aquitaine he saw a lady whose beauty was celebrated throughout the French provinces, and who immediately attracted his lawless admiration. This was Isabella, the daughter of the Count of Angoulême, lately betrothed to Hugh, Count of La Marche. Regardless of the ties by which both she and himself were bound, John seized possession of her person and took her to Angoulême, where the ceremony of marriage was performed between them by the Archbishop of Bordeaux. A few months later he returned to England, carrying with him his new wife, who was crowned at Westminster by the Archbishop of Canterbury. John himself was recrowned on that occasion. He then gave himself up to indolence and luxury, not knowing or caring how the kingdom was governed; heeding little the disaffection of his people at home, or the indignation which his tyranny had excited throughout France.

The Count of La Marche was a young and powerful chief, who was not likely to endure without resistance the grievous wrong he had suffered. The barons, his neighbours, made his cause their own; and when he raised the standard of rebellion they armed their retainers in his service. John, apprised of the storm which was gathering in the south, summoned his lords to attend him with their troops. Many of them at once refused, and said openly that they would not unsheathe their swords in such a paltry and dishonourable war. There were some high-minded men among the Anglo-Norman barons; but the majority of them were not apt to be so scrupulous, and their refusal was dictated by no other reason than their hatred to the king. They afterwards proposed to accompany him on condition of all their rights and liberties being restored. John's rage on this occasion gave him energy; and for a time he asserted his authority by compelling the barons to pay the tax of scutage, and to give hostages in place of their personal service. He then crossed over into Normandy, accompanied by Isabella, and proceeded to Paris, where he was received by Philip—a much abler hypocrite—with great show of courtesy. On his refusal, however, to answer the charges brought against him by the Poitevins, Louis declared his French provinces forfeited. The French king had already entered into an alliance with the Count of La Marche, and was at that moment engaged in organising a formidable insurrection in Brittany. A part of Aquitaine still remained quiet under the influence of Eleanor; and through this district John passed in state after he had quitted Paris. He, however, did not go for the purpose of fighting, and soon marched back again, having produced no other effect than to inspire the insurgents with contempt for so aimless a demonstration.

In the year 1202 the struggle at length commenced, which was destined to give a fatal blow to the Plantagenet power in France. It has been considered probable that had the successors of Henry II. possessed the abilities which distinguished that monarch, they would ultimately have extended their authority over the whole of France; but if we regard the relative geographical positions of the two countries, and the turbulent and warlike character of the French people, it will appear unlikely that such a condition of affairs could have been long maintained, and that, on the contrary, it was almost a matter of certainty that the French provinces would sooner or later become separated from the English crown; but that separation took place at a much earlier period than it otherwise would have done, in consequence of the indolence and pusillanimity of John. Philip, who had waited only to arrange certain differences in which he had been engaged with the Pope, now openly declared himself in favour of the claims of Arthur, and of the cause of the men of Aquitaine. He proclaimed the young prince Count of Brittany, Anjou, and Poitou, and gave him 200 knights, with whom he directed him to march and take possession of those provinces, and to conquer the towns of Poitou, which were in the hands of the English king. Arthur entered into a treaty, by which he resigned to Philip all the Norman territory of which the king had become possessed, or which he might obtain during the expedition which he was preparing to take into that province. Arthur then raised his standard and appealed for aid to the Bretons, who promptly responded to the call by joining in alliance with the Poitevins, and sending their prince 500 knights and 400 foot. These with 100 men-at-arms from Touraine and Poitou, and the small body of French troops, was all the force at his command. It did not suit the purpose of Philip to place too much power in the hands of the boy, to whom he never meant to resign any portion of those territories for which Arthur believed himself to be fighting.

Arthur was now an orphan, his mother Constance having died during his stay at the French court; he was in his fifteenth year, and therefore, though possessing all the valour of his race, he was necessarily deficient in knowledge of the art of war, and experience in the field. Nevertheless, the boy leader rode gallantly at the head of his little army, and led them against the town of Mirabel, in which his grandmother, Eleanor of Aquitaine, was then shut up. His advisers may probably have reminded him that Eleanor had always been the enemy of his mother, and that, could he take her prisoner, it would be an important step towards bringing the king, his uncle, to terms. Whether Arthur was or was not aware that his grandmother was within the town, the circumstance proved fatal to the success of the expedition. The town surrendered without much resistance, but not before Eleanor had thrown herself into the castle, which was very strong, and there this Amazon of eighty maintained a vigorous defence against the attacks of the prince, whose troops had occupied the town. The Breton army remained in apparent security, when John, who on this occasion displayed an extraordinary degree of activity, suddenly appeared before the gates of Mirabel. The troops of Arthur, though taken by surprise, made a gallant resistance, and it was only by means of treachery that, on the night of the 31st of July, John obtained possession of the town. The prince was taken while asleep, and the other leaders of the insurrection were made prisoners without the opportunity of resistance. Among these were the unhappy Count of La Marche, Isabella's former lover; the Viscounts of Thouars, Limoges, and Lusignan, and nearly 200 other nobles and knights of fame.

GREAT SEAL OF JOHN.

Of the fate of the young Prince Arthur, no authentic details have been recorded. That his youth and innocence did not save him from the bloody hands of John, is certain, but of the manner in which he came by his death we can form an idea only by comparing the different stories which are current on the subject among the old chroniclers. Arthur was conveyed by his uncle to the castle of Falaise, whence he was removed to that of Rouen. There he disappeared, and there ends the narrative of sober fact, the rest bringing us into the region of conjecture and probability. The Normans, who remained loyal to the English king, spread a report that Arthur died of sickness in the castle of Rouen, or was killed in attempting to make his escape; this statement may be at once rejected as a mere invention, and not a very ingenious one. The account given by some of the French chroniclers is to the following effect:—John having visited his nephew at Falaise, desired him to put confidence in his uncle. Arthur rejected his advances, and said indignantly, "Give me my inheritance, the kingdom of England." The king then sent him to Rouen, strongly guarded, and not long afterwards he suddenly disappeared. It was suspected by all men that John had murdered his nephew with his own hands, and he became the object of the deepest hatred. The monks of Margan relate that John killed the prince in a fit of drunkenness, and caused his body to be thrown into the Seine, with stones tied at his feet, but that, notwithstanding these, it was cast on the bank, and was buried at the abbey of Bec secretly, for fear of the tyrant.

The story current among the Bretons was nearly similar, with the difference of a change of scene. They related that John having feigned to be reconciled to his nephew, took him from the castle of Rouen, and caused him to ride in his company in the direction of Cherbourg, keeping near to the sea coast. Towards nightfall one evening, when the prince had ridden with his perfidious uncle in advance of their escort, they arrived at the top of a high cliff overlooking the sea, and John suddenly seized the boy round the waist and threw him over the cliff. Another account, more circumstantial, which has been generally received as likely to be the correct one, is given by Ralph, Abbot of Coggeshall. The story is as follows:—The king's councillors, having represented to him that the Bretons would continue their rebellion so long as Prince Arthur was in a condition to assume the sovereignty, suggested that the eyes of the boy should be put out, in order to render him unfit to govern. Some ruffians in the king's service were sent to the dungeon at Falaise to execute this cruel deed, but the tears and prayers of the youth, and his helpless condition, moved even their hearts to pity, and Hubert de Burgh, the warden of the castle, took advantage of their hesitation to forward an earnest appeal for mercy to the king. The only result of the petition was the removal of the prince from Falaise to Rouen. On the 3rd of April, 1203, he was roused from his

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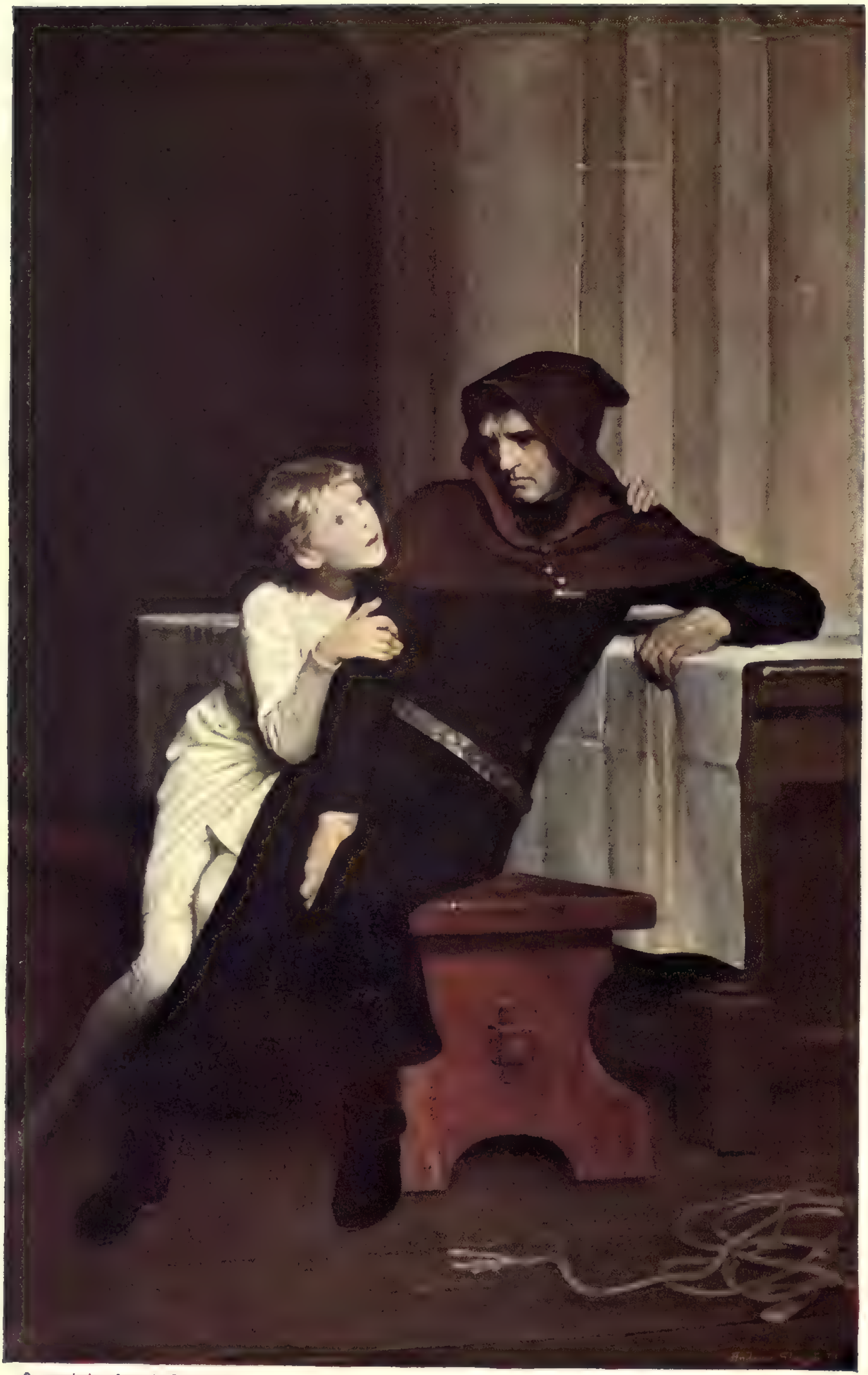

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PRINCE ARTHUR AND HUBERT.

BY W. F. YEAMES, R.A.

KING JOHN, ACT IV., SC. 1:
". . . HUBERT, IF YOU WILL, CUT OUT MY TONGUE,
SO I MAY KEEP MINE EYES: O, SPARE MINE EYES!"

sleep, and desired to descend to the foot of that tower, beside which flowed the placid waters of the Seine. At the bottom of the steps he saw a boat, in which was seated the king, his uncle, attended by an esquire named Peter de Mauley. The boy shrank back in terror, anticipating the fate which awaited him, and fell on his knees before his uncle, making a last appeal for mercy. But John, whose heart was harder than those of the vilest wretches in his pay, gave the sign, and the murder was committed. Some relate that the esquire hesitated to obey the sign, and

MURDER OF PRINCE ARTHUR. (*See p.* 257.)

that John himself seized his nephew by the hair, ran him through the body, and threw him into the water. Other writers, however, assert that de Mauley was the actual murderer, and this statement is confirmed by the fact that soon afterwards John gave him the hand of a rich heiress in marriage, in all likelihood as the reward of his services.

However near the truth these different statements may have been, it is certain that the rumour of the murder was spread throughout Brittany during the same month of April. The indignation of the people was universal; they had believed their future destiny to be connected with that of their prince, and they professed the greatest attachment to the French king, as the enemy of his murderer. The elder sister of Arthur, the Maid of Brittany—whose lot was scarcely more fortunate than that of her brother—was confined in a monastery at Bristol, where she remained for forty years; but the people declared Alice, daughter of Constance by her last husband, and half-sister to Arthur, to be their duchess, and appointed her father, Guy of Thouars, as their regent or governor. The barons of the province then appeared before Philip, to whom, as their feudal suzerain, they complained of the murder of their prince. Philip eagerly availed himself of the appeal, and cited John, as his vassal for the duchy of Normandy, before the court of the barons of France, to whom, it may be noted, the name of peers was now first given. The accused monarch did not put in an appearance, and was condemned by the court to the forfeiture of all the lands which he held of the kingdom of France, possession of which was to be taken by arms.

No sooner did Philip appear with his forces on the frontier of Poitou, than the inhabitants rose to join his standard, and when he returned to attack Normandy, he found he was anticipated by the Bretons, who had occupied the whole of that portion of the duchy which bordered on their territories. They took by assault the strong castle of Mount St. Michael, seized upon Avranches, and burned the villages which lay between that city and Caen. These successes gave new strength to the expedition of the French king, who, joined by the people of Anjou and Maine, took Bayeux, Evreux, Domfront, and Lisieux, and then joined the Breton army at Caen. While this formidable confederacy menaced him on every side, John was passing his days in voluptuous indolence, or in the sports of the field; he again refused to answer complaints at Paris. When his courtiers brought him intelligence of new successes on the part of his enemies, he expressed his contempt of the rabble of Bretons and of anything they could do; but when, in the month of December, the insurgents appeared in the neighbourhood of Rouen, he suddenly became aware of the danger in which he was placed, and fled over into England.

On his arrival he demanded the aid of the barons to raise an army for his service, but the call was responded to with the utmost apathy. It would appear that the Anglo-Norman lords no longer possessed the great estates they had formerly held in Normandy; for had such been the case it is not probable that their hatred to the king would have induced them to disregard their own interests. After in vain attempting to raise a sufficient force to oppose the French king, John appealed to Rome (1205), and Pope Innocent sent two legates into France for the purpose of negotiating a peace. Philip, however, who had everything to gain by prolonging the war, not unnaturally refused to listen to the entreaties of the legates, and their mission ended without success.

When John fled from Normandy, there remained in his possession throughout the duchy only the town of Rouen, and the fortresses of Château-Gaillard and Verneuil. The people of Rouen held out until they were reduced to the last extremity by famine, when, having concluded a truce of thirty days with the French king, they sent to John praying for succour. The messengers found the king playing at chess, and while they told their deplorable tale, he remained seated at his game, and gave them no answer. When the game was over, he told them that he had no means of helping them, and that they must do the best they could. This was the only recognition he made of the heroic struggle of the citizens on his behalf. Rouen surrendered, the two castles soon afterwards followed its example, and the conquest of Normandy was complete. This duchy was then finally restored to the French crown, after having been separated from it for 292 years. Within the same year, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, Poitou, and Brittany also fell under the authority of Philip, and John retained only a few castles in those provinces besides the territory of Aquitaine, which remained nominally under his rule.

The Bretons soon discovered that, so far from having recovered their independence, they had changed the tyranny of a weak arm for that of a strong one. Disgusted with the supremacy of the King of France, they made efforts which proved fruitless to renew their alliance with John, and then, with a sort of suicidal ferocity, they aided their new sovereign to destroy the independence of their neighbours. In the year 1206, John landed an army at La Rochelle, whence he proceeded to the Loire, taking the castle of Montauban, and burning the town of Angers. His energy, however, did not last long, and for several months he gave himself up to feasting and debauchery. Aroused once more, he passed on to the town of Nantes, to which he laid siege; but on the approach of Philip with an army, he raised the siege, and proposed to negotiate with the French king. During the negotiations John ran away to England covered with disgrace. By the intervention of the Pope, however, a truce for two years was then arranged between the two kings.

Degraded as he was in the eyes of all honourable men, John retained his arrogance, and governed his kingdom with greater tyranny than ever. In the following year (1207) he defied the authority of the power which was concentred in the Holy See, now so formidable throughout Europe, and which he, of all men, was least fitted to resist. The ground of the quarrel was the right of the crown to the appointment of bishops.

Archbishop Hubert, of Canterbury, died in 1205, and a dispute arose between the monks of the cathedral and the suffragan bishops of the diocese, both parties claiming the right to elect the new archbishop. Some of the younger monks proceeded to settle the question off-hand, and without consulting the bishops or the king, secretly elected their sub-prior, Reginald. He was sent to Rome; but before reaching the Pope he bragged of his good fortune, and the news reached England. The elder monks took alarm, went to the king and agreed to elect John de Grey, Bishop of Norwich, who was one of John's ministers. He also was sent to Rome, and shortly afterwards appeared representatives from the bishops, who were angry at being altogether disregarded. Innocent settled the knotty question in a masterly manner. He decided that the right of election lay neither with the king nor the bishops, but with the monks; the election of Reginald, however, had been irregular, and, therefore, he ordered such of the monks as were at Rome to elect an entirely new candidate, Stephen Langton, cardinal-priest of St. Chrysogonus. John, however, was determined that his favourite, John de Grey, Bishop of Norwich, should receive the appointment, and he sent two knights with a body of soldiers to Canterbury to drive the rebellious monks out of the country. Once more those walls which had witnessed the murder of Becket were profaned by a deed of violence; the monks were compelled to quit their monastery and take refuge in Flanders, where they were received into the religious houses.

Innocent, who was a man of great ability, sent a temperate letter to the king, demanding redress for this outrage; but John returned an insolent reply, and set the Pontiff at defiance. Soon afterwards the Bishops of London, Ely, and Worcester received directions from Rome to wait upon the king, and in case they were still unable to obtain redress for the injury, to threaten him with an interdict upon the whole kingdom. John heard the threat with transports of rage, and swore that if the bishops dared to lay his states under an interdict, he would seize upon their property, and drive them and their clergy penniless to Rome; that if any Roman priests dared to appear in the country, he would cut off their noses and tear out their eyes, and so make them a witness of his vengeance before the nations. Undeterred by these savage menaces, the bishops proclaimed the interdict on the 23rd of March, 1208, and then fled across the Channel. The interdict was carried out to the fullest extent by the unanimous concurrence of the clergy. During this time the country lay as it were in mourning, the churches were closed, the pictures of the saints covered with black cloth, and their relics laid on ashes in the aisles; the priests refused their offices, with the exception of administering the rite of baptism to infants and the sacrament to the dying; and the command of Rome suspended all public prayers to Heaven. At the end of the year Innocent proceeded to further measures, and issued against John the sentence of excommunication.

The king now became alarmed at his position. He saw the spirit of disaffection increasing among his barons; he had made enemies of the clergy, and he was hated by the people. Abroad, the aspect of affairs was no less menacing. He knew that the Pope would follow up the sentence of excommunication by proclaiming his dethronement, and declaring him unworthy to rule in a Christian land; and he perceived that Philip was making ready to invade England, armed with the authority of the Holy See. Wherever he looked he saw none but enemies, and it was evident that his downfall would be attended with a general rejoicing throughout Europe. It is related by Matthew Paris that at this moment of danger John applied for succour to the Emir al Nassir, the powerful chief of the Moslems of Spain. It was even reported that he had offered to embrace the religion of Mahomet, and to become a vassal of the Emir, in return for the assistance he demanded. Improbable and disgraceful as such an offer would have been, there is no doubt that John was capable of making it; but if he did so, it was not accepted, and the king was compelled to give up the attempt to obtain assistance from abroad.

For the purpose of raising an army, John determined to obtain money by any and every means in his power, and in the spring of 1210 he commenced a series of exactions, compared with which those of his predecessors had been moderate. He employed the most lawless means of forcing their hoards from his subjects, and especially from the Jews, who, as the richest, were invariably the first to suffer on such occasions. He declared that his object was to drive the French king from Normandy; but as soon as he had raised an army, he crossed over into Ireland, where the English nobles had thrown off his authority. He landed on the 6th of June, and on his arrival at Dublin many of the native chiefs came to offer him their homage. With their assistance he marched through the country, destroying the castles of the insurgent barons, who were totally unprepared for resistance, and within a few weeks he had reduced them to submission. He then established English laws in the island, appointing officers to see them duly executed; he also directed that the same coins of money should be used in the two countries—a measure by which the interests of commerce were greatly promoted. Having appointed John de Grey, Bishop of Norwich, to the government of the island, he returned to England. This expedition, in which he encountered no opposition, encouraged him to make a descent upon Wales in the following year (1211). For this purpose more money was required, and he obtained it by measures more flagitious, if possible, than before. He summoned before him all the heads of religious establishments, abbots and abbesses, and compelled them to deliver up the property of the Church into his hands. Having exhausted this source of supply, he again attacked the unfortunate Jews, visiting them with imprisonment and the torture to force a compliance with his peremptory demands.

Having now raised a great army the king entered Wales and penetrated as far as Snowdon. The people could make no resistance against the force brought against them, and they were compelled to pay to him a tribute of cattle, and to give twenty-eight hostages, the sons of their chiefs, as security for their fidelity. But the efforts made by John to destroy their independence proved altogether fruitless. Their strength now, as in former years, lay in their mountain fastnesses; the spirit of freedom has her seat among mountains in every age and country. Within a year after the king's return to England, the Welsh were again up in arms. As soon as the news was brought to John he hanged the unhappy youths who were in his hands as hostages, and he was preparing for another descent upon Wales, when he learnt that a conspiracy was forming against him among the English barons. He then immediately relinquished his intention, and shut himself up for fifteen days in Nottingham Castle, where he seems to have stayed in something like an extremity of fear. His acts at this time were dictated entirely by impulses, now of cruelty, now of cowardice, and cannot be accounted for by any rational rule of conduct. Suddenly he recovered his courage, quitted Nottingham, and marched to Chester, once more declaring that he would exterminate the Welsh; then as suddenly he retraced his steps and marched into Northumberland, where the barons were in arms against him. It would appear that he lived in continual dread of his life, suffering no one to approach him but his immediate attendants and favourites, whose fidelity he secured by his gold, and keeping himself surrounded by large bodies of foreign mercenaries. Hated as he knew himself to be, he made no attempt to change his tyrannical conduct, or to conciliate the regard of the people, but, on the contrary, each day witnessed some new act of cruelty, which rendered him still more obnoxious to his subjects.

At length Pope Innocent listened to the prayers of the English exiles, solemnly proclaimed the deposition of the English king, as an enemy to the Church of Christ, and called upon all Christian princes to take up arms against him, and to join in hurling him from the throne. Stephen Langton, the banished Archbishop of Canterbury, with other prelates, appeared with the Pope's letters at the French court, there called together a solemn council, and informed the king and lords of France that the Pope gave his sanction to the invasion of England. Innocent promised to Philip the remission of his sins provided he accepted and fulfilled the solemn commission with which he was charged. Philip had other inducements to do so, which were sufficiently strong, and he at once collected an army on the coast of Normandy, and caused a fleet of 1,700 vessels to be made ready at Boulogne and other ports to convey it across the Channel.

Aroused by the imminence of the danger, John appealed to his subjects to resist the foreign invader, and collected all the vessels in the kingdom which were capable of being used as transports. Then, under the influence of one of his fits of energy, he acted with boldness and determination; and before the French fleet had quitted Normandy the English vessels crossed the Channel, and swept along the coast. The superiority already attained by the English sailors was clearly shown on this occasion, and was soon to be still more decisively manifested. A French squadron at the mouth of the Seine was destroyed by the English, who also burned down the town of Dieppe, and returned triumphantly, the fleet at Boulogne not having ventured to leave the harbour.

INTERIOR OF ROUEN CATHEDRAL.

While success thus crowned the arms of John on the sea, he possessed on shore a numerous army of stout English yeomen, who had joined his standard, and who, whatever might be their feelings towards him personally, would doubtless have fought well to save their country from a foreign yoke. But John's courage seldom endured beyond the first moments of excitement, and when he found time to calculate risks and chances, he consulted his own safety by any means in his power. He took no measures for following up his successes, and it was evident that, in spite of his haughty defiance of the power of Rome, he would now be glad to escape from his dangerous position by humbling himself before it. Pandulph, the legate of the Pope, who fully understood the character of John, obtained permission to land in England, and presented himself in the royal presence. He laid before the king the impolicy of his course of action, the danger he incurred from the French king, whose formidable preparations he described, and the probability of a general rebellion among the English barons. The facts were undeniable, and urged as they were with all the skill and eloquence of an able diplomatist, they produced the greatest alarm in the breast of the tyrant. This feeling was increased by the prediction of a hermit named Peter, who asserted that before Ascension Day, which was three days distant, the king would have ceased to reign. Irreligious as he was, John was by no means free from superstition, and he seems to have attached more weight to the words of the friar, which he believed foretold his death, than to the arguments of the legate. After some hesitation, his fears prevailed, and he agreed to sign an agreement or treaty with the Pope, by which he bound himself to fulfil all the Church's demands, the refusal of which had caused his excommunication; to restore the monks of Canterbury to their lands; to receive into favour all the exiled clergy, especially Stephen Langton, the Archbishop of Canterbury; and to make satisfaction to both clergy and laity for any injuries they had sustained in consequence of the interdict, paying down a sum of £8,000 as a first instalment of such indemnity.

Pandulph agreed, in the Pope's name, that on the performance of these conditions the interdict should be removed from the country, and that the servants of the Church, including the exiled bishops, should swear fidelity to the king. Four of the chief barons of the kingdom bore witness to this compact, which was solemnly concluded. By this agreement John suffered no peculiar indignity, but it was immediately followed by a proceeding in the highest degree disgraceful, and which can only be accounted for by the subtle art with which the legate worked upon the fears of the pusillanimous monarch. On the 15th of May, 1213, John proceeded at an early hour in the morning to the church of the Templars at Dover, and there, in the presence of the bishops and nobles of the realm, he knelt down before Pandulph, placed his crown in his hands, and took the oath of fealty to the Pope. At the same time he gave into the hands of the legate a document which set forth that he, the King of England, Lord of Ireland, in atonement for his sins against God and the Church, did of his own free will, and with the consent of the barons, surrender into the hands of Pope Innocent and his successors for ever, the kingdom of England and lordship of Ireland, to hold them henceforth as fiefs of the Holy See, John and his successors paying for them a yearly tribute of 700 marks for England, and 300 marks for Ireland.

On the following day, which was the Feast of the Ascension, John awoke with something of the feeling of a criminal whose hour of execution has arrived. The words of the hermit Peter caused him to tremble even more than the thunders of Rome; and he watched the long hours till sunset, anticipating the stroke which was to end his hateful existence. When the time of the prediction had passed away, and he found himself still alive, he caused Peter and his son to be dragged at the tails of horses to the gibbet where they were executed as a punishment for the terror they had caused him. But it was commonly said among the people that the monk had told no lie; and that John had ceased to be a king when he laid his crown at the feet of a foreign priest.

The Holy See, having secured a humble and subservient vassal in the King of England, now espoused his cause, and undertook to defend him against his enemies. Pandulph returned to France, and forbade Philip to prosecute the war, or to invade a kingdom which was under the protection of the Church. Philip thought proper to argue the matter on religious grounds, and said that he had expended large sums of money upon this expedition, for the purpose of obtaining, according to the promise of the Pontiff, the remission of his sins. The legate seems to have cared little about this circumstance, and simply repeated his prohibition. Philip then continued his march towards the coast, prepared to defy the authority of the Holy See, and to continue the expedition, now no longer for the remission of his sins, but avowedly for more worldly ends. His design, however, was frustrated by the disaffection of his vassals, to whom the command of the Pope served as a sufficient justification of rebellion. The Count of Flanders withdrew his forces from the expedition, declaring that he would not engage in such an unjust war. Philip immediately followed him into Flanders, intending to punish his rebellion by seizing upon the whole province. Several towns and fortresses fell into the French king's hands, who passed on, and laid siege to the strong city of Ghent. The Count of Flanders then applied to John for assistance, which it was manifestly to his interest to grant, and which, therefore, was not refused.

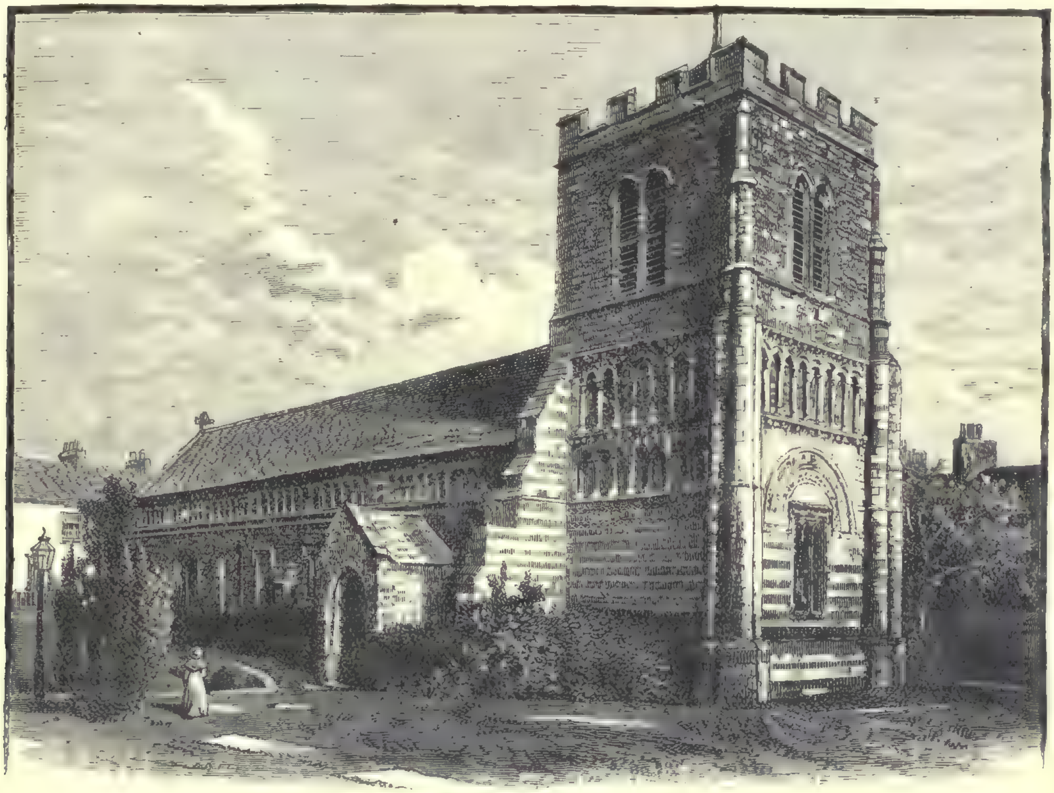
The English fleet set sail from the harbour of Portsmouth; 500 vessels, having on board 700 knights and a large force of infantry, under the command of William Longsword, Earl of Salisbury, a son of "fair Rosamond," and William, Earl of Holland. They bore down upon the coast of Flanders, and approached the port of Damme, in which the French fleet, three times more numerous, was lying at anchor. Many of the French troops and sailors were then absent from the ships, engaged in predatory excursions throughout the country. As the English neared the coast, they saw a number of vessels lying outside the harbour, which, capacious as it was, could not contain them all. Shallops, or fishing boats, were then sent in to reconnoitre, and returned with the news that the fleet had been left without sufficient hands to defend it. No time was lost. The "tall ships" along the coast were attacked, and captured with little difficulty. The smaller vessels, which, when the tide went down, were left upon the beach, were plundered and set on fire, the men on board escaping to the shore. The English then approached the harbour, for the purpose of attacking the fleet within it; but here a delay took place, in consequence of the difficulty of bringing a large force to bear in so confined a space.

The period of inaction, however, did not last long, and the fleet, on the preparation of which Philip had exhausted his resources, was annihilated. When the conquerors had returned thanks to Heaven for their victory, they sent 300 of the prizes to England; these were richly laden with stores for the French army—corn, oil, wine, and other provisions. Others of the ships which were on shore, were burnt within the harbour. A portion of the fleet, which lay higher up, protected by the town, still remained uninjured; and the English, having landed, were joined by the Count of Flanders, and proceeded to attack the place. Meanwhile the French king had learnt the destruction of his fleet, and having raised the siege of Ghent, was advancing with the utmost rapidity. The English and the Flemings made a gallant defence in the engagement which soon afterwards took place; but the force opposed to them was overwhelming, and they were compelled to retreat to their ships, with a loss which is stated by the French to have been 2,000 men. But the English had no intention of relinquishing the contest, and from the shores of the Isle of Walcheren, they watched their opportunity for renewing the attack. Philip perceived that the unskilfulness of his seamen left no hope of preserving the remainder of his ships, and he therefore set fire to them himself, that they might not fall into the enemy's hands. It was evident that the project of invading England must now be abandoned, the French king having no means of transporting his troops across the Channel. He even found it impossible to maintain them in Flanders, and was compelled to make a hasty retreat into his own territories, with scarcely an effort to maintain possession of the towns he had taken.

Elated by the success of his arms, John assumed all his old arrogance of demeanour, and showed little disposition to fulfil the terms of the treaty into which he had entered with the Pope. He now determined to invade France, and for this purpose he summoned the barons of the kingdom to attend him at Portsmouth with their troops. They obeyed the command; but when, in warlike array, they appeared before the king, they refused to set sail unless the exiled bishops were immediately recalled, according to his promise. John was compelled to submit, and Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, with the Bishops of London, Ely, Lincoln, Bath, and Hereford, were restored to their benefices. The monks of Canterbury also returned in peace to their cloister. The king and the archbishop met each other at Winchester, where they exchanged a kiss of amity, and Langton gave the king absolution for the injuries done to himself and his colleagues; John once more taking an oath to execute justice, and to preserve his fealty to the Pope. But Stephen Langton, one of the ablest men who ever had filled the archiepiscopal chair, was not likely to place much confidence in the promises of the king; and John evidently regarded the archbishop with bitter hatred, as the cause of all his troubles.

JOHN DOING HOMAGE TO THE POPE'S LEGATE. *(See p. 262.)*

Leaving directions for the barons to follow him with all speed, John embarked a body of troops in a few ships, and reached the island of Jersey. The barons, however, were little disposed to follow their cowardly king; and the scheme for securing their liberties, which, in a vague and indefinite form, had long held possession of their minds, now began to assume strength and consistency. They excused themselves from following the king, by the assertion that their term of feudal service was expired; and, profiting by his absence, proceeded to hold a great council at St. Albans, at which they formulated the complaints of the nation, and threatened with death such of the king's officers as should exceed their provisions. Meanwhile, John, having looked in vain for the appearance of the barons, returned from Jersey in a transport of rage, and, collecting his army of mercenaries, marched towards the north, burning up and devastating the lands of the rebellious nobles. At Northampton, he was met by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who openly censured these acts of violence, and told him that, according to his oath, his vassals ought to be tried by their peers, and not crushed by arms. "Mind you your church," the king replied, "and leave me to govern the state." He then continued his march to Nottingham; but here, Langton, who joined the courage of the soldier to the wisdom of the priest, again presented himself in the royal presence, and this time with more determined carriage. He calmly told the king that if such a course of action was continued, he would excommunicate all the ministers and officers of the crown who obeyed the royal will. John seldom maintained his ground against a determined opponent, and he now gave way once more, and, as a matter of form, summoned the barons to meet him, or his justices. Having thus stopped the tyrannous career of the king, the brave archbishop proceeded to London, where, on the 25th of August, he called a second council of the barons, and read to them the provisions of the charter granted by Henry I. on his accession. In that assembly of feudal lords he delivered an address advocating the principles of liberty and justice; and, having induced the council to adopt as the basis of their operations the charter of Henry I., he caused them to swear fidelity to each other, and to the cause in which they were embarked. A month later, the Cardinal Nicholas, a new legate of the Pope, arrived in England, for the purpose of receiving the indemnity which had been promised by John, and of removing the interdict from the kingdom. Once more John appeared on his knees, renewing his oath of fealty to Innocent, and doing homage to the legate. He paid the sum of 15,000 marks to the bishops, and undertook to give them 40,000 more. The



ST. PETER'S CHURCH, NORTHAMPTON.

interdict was then removed, the churches lost their funereal appearance, and once more the bells rang out their daily call to prayer. The cause of liberty has never been long maintained by the Church of Rome; and as soon as the submission of John was thus completely assured, she relinquished her support of the barons, and commanded her bishops to give their unreserved allegiance to the king. The nobles, however, still relied upon the strength of their cause, although unblessed by the Pope; and Stephen Langton remained firmly at their head, as one who dared do right though all the world forbade it.

The following year (1214) was rendered memorable by the battle of Bouvines, in which the French gained a complete victory over English, Flemish, and German troops. A powerful confederacy, in which John took a prominent part, had been formed against the French king. Ferrand, Count of Flanders, Reynaud, Count of Boulogne, and Otho, Emperor of Germany, determined, along with John, to invade France simultaneously, and to divide that kingdom among themselves. The partition was already made: Ferrand was to receive Paris, with the Isle of France, Reynaud the country of Vermandois, John the territory beyond the Loire, and Otho all the remaining provinces. The English king dispatched a body of troops, commanded by William Longsword, Earl of Salisbury, to Valenciennes, which had been appointed the headquarters of the confederates; he then proceeded to Poitou, whence he led his army into Brittany. Philip, who was thus menaced on both sides, sent his son Louis to oppose the troops of John, and to prevent his advance. This was not difficult, and the cowardice or indecision of the English king kept him in a state of inactivity, while his allies were being utterly routed. Philip, whose forces were inferior in number to those of his enemies, gave them battle at Bouvines, a village between Lisle and Tournay, and after a sanguinary conflict the Earl of Salisbury, the Count of Flanders, and the Count of Boulogne were taken prisoners, together with great numbers of nobles and knights of inferior rank. The Bishop of Beauvais, whose martial spirit was untamed by his long imprisonment, appeared again in the field on this occasion, and he it was who took prisoner the gallant William Longsword. The bishop, however, no longer used a sword, but carried in its stead a formidable club, with which he laid about him, having satisfied himself, by some curious logical process, that in doing so he was acting in accordance with the canon of the Church, which forbade her priests to shed blood. He was not the only bishop who distinguished himself on that day as a warrior. Guerin of Senlis appeared among the French troops, like Odo of Bayeux among the soldiers of the Conqueror, bearing a wand, or staff of authority, with which he waved them on to victory. The battle of Bouvines, which was fought on the 27th of July, 1214, completed the ruin of John.

A few months later John made proposals for a truce, which he obtained for five years, on condition of restoring all the towns and fortresses which he had taken during the expedition. He then made a disgraceful retreat to England, where, with the true spirit of a coward, he vented upon his unoffending subjects that rage which he dared not display towards his foes. He disregarded all the vows he had taken, and let loose his foreign mercenaries over the country, who oppressed and robbed the people in every direction, unrestrained by law, and secure of the king's favour. But his career of tyranny was now drawing to a close. Each day which was marked by new acts of oppression cemented more closely the league among the barons, who only waited an opportunity of assembling together for the purpose of arranging a combined movement. Such an opportunity presented itself at the feast of St. Edmund, on the 20th of November, when pilgrims of all ranks, from every part of the country, proceeded to St. Edmundsbury to offer their devotions at the shrine of the saint. Mingling with the crowd of worshippers, the champions of freedom advanced one by one in order of seniority to the high altar, on which they placed their swords, and swore that if the king refused to admit the rights they demanded from him, they would one and all abandon their allegiance, renounce their vows of fealty, and compel him by force of arms to sign a charter granting their just requests. Having agreed to assemble at the court for this purpose during the approaching festival of Christmas, they separated.

When Christmas Day arrived John was at Worcester, where he was attended only by a few of his immediate retainers and the foreign mercenaries. None of his great vassals came, as the custom was at that season, to offer their congratulations. His attendants tried in vain to assume an appearance of cheerfulness and festivity, and among the people such an appearance had long ceased to be found when the king was present. Alarmed at the gloom which surrounded him, and the desertion of the barons, John hastily rode to London, and there shut himself up in the house of the Knights Templars, which was as strong as a fortress. The temper in which the barons entered upon their cause may be inferred from the seasons which they chose for their efforts, and the manner in which they invoked, as it were, the blessing of Heaven upon them. Some holy day consecrated each step of their way, and marked the renewal of the struggle against tyranny. On the feast of the Epiphany they assembled in great force at London, and presenting themselves before the king, demanded an audience. John was compelled to grant the request, but he assumed a bold and defiant air, and met the barons with an absolute refusal, and the most violent threats. Two of their number were affected by these menaces, and one of the bishops joined them in consenting to recede from their claims; but the rest of the assembly were made of sterner stuff, and firmly maintained their demands. John looked upon their calm and dauntless faces with a dread which he could not conceal. He entirely changed his manner, and descended from invective to expostulation. "This petition," he said, "treats of matters weighty and arduous. You must grant me time for deliberation until Easter, that I may be able, in considering the request, to satisfy the dignity of my crown." Many of the barons were opposed to such a delay, knowing how little dependence could be placed upon the king's good faith; but the greater number consented on condition that Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, William, Earl of Pembroke, and the Bishop of Ely, should be sureties for the king that he would give them a reply at the time appointed.

As soon as the nobles had quitted his presence, John directed his efforts to escaping from the pledge he had given, and took measures which he hoped would bring the rebellious lords within the reach of his vengeance. The important privilege of the appointment of bishops, which in former years had given rise to so many disputes between the Crown and the Church, was now formally abandoned; and when, by this means, John believed himself to have secured the goodwill of the clergy, he caused a new oath of allegiance to be administered by the sheriffs to all the free men of their several counties. He then dispatched messengers to Rome, entreating the aid of the Pope against the treasonable violence of the barons. Innocent listened to the appeal, and showed himself determined to support the cause of his royal vassal. The English nobles had also sent their message to the Pontiff, but he answered it only by a letter of threats and reproaches, which was addressed to Stephen Langton, commanding him and his colleagues at once to cease their opposition to the king. Langton, with a high-souled courage, the full extent of which we can now only imperfectly appreciate, disregarded the command, and dared to defend a righteous cause, even in defiance of the Pope. The king, as a last effort to sustain his tottering throne, assumed the cross, making a solemn oath that he would lead an army on a new crusade to the Holy Land.

When Easter day arrived the king was at Oxford. The barons of England assembled at Stamford, attended by 2,000 knights, and vast multitudes of their retainers, and of the people. They had marched to Brackley, when they were met by Stephen Langton, the Earl of Warrenne, and the Earl of Pembroke, who came to bear their message to the king. The barons delivered the schedule containing the chief articles of the petition, and declared that if their claims were not instantly granted they would appeal to arms. When the deputation returned to the king, and Langton explained to him the terms of the document which he brought, John fell into a transport of rage, and swore that he would not grant them liberties which would make him a slave. He proposed some modifications of the charter which were at once rejected. Pandulph, who stood at his side, asserted that the primate of the kingdom ought to excommunicate the rebels; but Langton replied that the Pope's real intentions had not been expressed, and that so far from doing so, he would excommunicate the foreign mercenaries who overran the kingdom, unless the king ordered their instant dismissal.

The barons now declared war against the king, chose Robert Fitz-Walter as their leader, and marched against the castle of Northampton, which was garrisoned by foreigners. "The army of God and the Church," for so they styled themselves, was composed of the best and bravest men in the kingdom; but the strong fortress to which they first laid siege resisted all their attacks. They had prepared no battering-rams, or other necessary engines; and the garrison, on their side, fought with the desperation of men who knew that they had earned for their misdeeds a bitter retribution After fifteen days the besiegers raised the siege, and marched towards Bedford. The barons were strong in arms, and in the justice of their cause; but their strength was not of itself sufficient to overturn the throne, or force the king to submission. Within the past century a middle class of freemen had been growing up in the country, increasing in wealth and influence year by year. Had the king possessed the affections of the free burghers of England, the Anglo-Norman barons, powerful as they were, would have been driven from the country; but the people knew that now, at least, the cause of the nobles was their own, and they rose with joy to welcome the pioneers of freedom. The men of Bedford opened their gates at the approach of the army, and the citizens of London sent messengers to the leaders, inviting them to march thither with all speed, and assuring them of the support of the people.

On Sunday, the 24th of May, the troops of Fitz-Walter reached the capital. The city of London lay wrapped in that Sabbath stillness which, on summer days descends like a blessing upon an English landscape, as though Nature herself had ceased from labour. The gates were open, and the music of the church bells floated softly through the air as the "army of God" approached the walls. They passed through the streets in perfect order and profound silence—a mien well suited to convey to all who saw them a conviction of the solemn nature of the duty they came to perform, and of the calm determination with which they would pursue their object. On the following day the barons issued a proclamation to all the nobles and knights of the kingdom who had remained neutral, calling upon them to join the national standard, unless they wished to be treated as enemies of their country. This proclamation aroused the slumbering patriotism of those who received it. The baron, with his troop of men-at-arms, and the knight, whose only property was his horse and his sword, alike hastened to London. In the words of the old chroniclers, there is no need to name the men who composed the "army of God and the Church;" they were the whole nobility of England.

Such a demonstration as this might have made a much braver monarch than John Lackland turn white with fear. Only a very few knights from among his numerous courtiers remained at his side, and these were hardly retained in their allegiance by a mingling of lavish promises and threats. The terror of the king now conquered his rage. Once more he assumed an affable demeanour, and with a sickly smile he told the Earl of Pembroke that the barons had done well, and that, for the sake of peace and the exaltation of his reign, he was ready to grant the liberties they demanded. From Odiham, in Hampshire, where John was then staying, the Earl of Pembroke carried this message to his friends, and informed them that the king only desired them to name a day and place of meeting. The barons replied—"Let the day be the 15th of June; the place, Runny-mede."

The scene thus chosen was well suited to the occasion. No narrow walls of wood or stone, which in succeeding years should crumble into dust and leave no trace, bore witness to the solemn act whose effects were destined to extend to remotest ages—the victory of freedom was gained under the free sky, the dome of the universal temple of God. On the appointed day the king quitted Windsor Castle, and proceeded to the green meadow which was called by the Saxon name of Runnymede, situated on the banks of the Thames between Staines and Windsor. He was attended by Pandulph, Almeric, the Grand Master of the Templars, the Earl of Pembroke, together with eight bishops and thirteen other men of rank; but of these, though they stood at his side, few really adhered to the tyrant, or were prepared to give him any advice contrary to the wishes of the people. On the other side stood the barons of the kingdom, attended by a vast multitude, representing all other classes of the population. So completely was the arrogance of the king subdued, so hopeless appeared all resistance, that, with scarcely a word of remonstrance, John gave his assent to the document which, as the foundation of the liberties of England, is known to us by the name of Magna Charta—the Great Charter.

To the Englishman of modern times, the event of that day bears a deep and solemn interest, far surpassing that of battles or of conquests. He is surrounded now by many of the blessings which freedom gives to all who live beneath her sway. Under her warm smile civilisation grows and flourishes, knowledge sheds around her calm, undying light; wrong is redressed by free opinion; and man, with brow erect, throws off the tyranny of man. In the green meadow by the Thames was sown the seed which bears such fruits as these. Centuries more of toil and struggle may be needed to bring it to maturity. The progress of the human race is slow, and beset with difficulties: amidst the present material prosperity, with all the advantages of civil and religious liberty, we are still far from the

JOHN REFUSING HIS ASSENT TO THE ARTICLES OF THE BARONS. (*See p.* 267.)

goal which lies before us. Error still treads close upon the heels of Truth; poverty still retains her grasp upon half the world, grinding men down to a life-long struggle, with little joy or hope. But the work steadily goes on. With each passing year flies a prejudice; with each passing year some gigantic wrong lifts up its head, and claims and meets redress. Now, at least, the way is open to us, and cannot be mistaken; the light of Heaven shines full upon it, the obstacles grow fewer and weaker every day, the efforts to oppose them grow stronger, and the final triumph is secure. The value and importance of Magna Charta is not to be estimated by its immediate application to ourselves. Those positive laws and institutions of later times, which secure our rights and liberties, all have their root in this charter.

It had many evils to remedy. (I.) In the first place the Church secured its rights and freedom of election. (II.) Then came provisions against the royal exactions from the tenants. During the reigns of the successors of the Conqueror, the king had exercised the power of exacting arbitrary payments from his subjects under the name of reliefs; of farming out the estates of his wards to the highest bidder; of marrying the heir during his minority, heiresses at any age above fourteen, and widows if they held estates of the crown, giving their hands to whom he pleased. In the reign of John, the exercise of the laws was a matter of common bargain and sale. Bribes—or, as they were called, fines—were received for the king's help, against adverse suitors, for perversion of justice, or delay in its administration. Sometimes it would happen that bribes were given by both parties, in which case it may be supposed that the highest bidder would gain the day, the money of those who lost being returned to them. The charters which had been granted by Henry I., Stephen, and Henry II., had little effect on this state of things, and were, in fact, repeatedly violated both by themselves and their successors. By the provisions of Magna Charta reliefs were limited to a moderate sum, computed according to the rank of the tenant; the wrong and waste committed by the guardians in chivalry restrained; the disparagement in matrimony of female wards was forbidden; and widows were secured from being forcibly disposed of in marriage. (III.) Arbitrary taxation was provided against by the provision that scutage and aids were henceforward to be granted by the Great Council of the kingdom, except in the cases of the deliverance of the king from prison, the knightage of his eldest son, and the marriage of his eldest daughter. The elements of the great council are also described, and their character will appear from these pages. (IV.) The franchises of the city of London, and of all towns and boroughs were declared inviolate. (V.) The ports were freely thrown open to foreign merchants, and they were permitted to come and go as they pleased. (VI.) The Court of Common Pleas, which had hitherto followed the king's person, whereby much inconvenience and injustice had been occasioned, was fixed at Westminster.

The most important clauses of Magna Charta are those which protect the personal liberty and property of every freeman in the kingdom, by giving security from arbitrary imprisonment and unjust exactions. (VII.) "No freeman," says the Charter, "shall be taken, or imprisoned, or dispossessed of his tenement, or be outlawed or exiled, or any otherwise destroyed; nor will we go upon him nor send upon him, unless by the lawful judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land. (VIII.) To none will we sell, to none will we deny or delay, right or justice."

The barons required securities for the due observance of these provisions. They demanded that the foreign officers of the crown, with their families and retainers, should be sent out of the country; that the barons should keep possession of the city, and Stephen Langton of the Tower of London, for the two months following; that twenty-five of their number should act as guardians of the liberties of the realm, whose business it should be to secure the observance of the charter, and who, in case of its provisions being disregarded, should have power to make war upon the king, and to seize upon his towns, castles, or other possessions, until the grievance should be redressed. By this article the twenty-five barons were invested with the real government of the kingdom, setting aside altogether the royal prerogative—a measure which, opposed as it was to all precedent, must be considered as having been rendered necessary by the duplicity of the king, by whom the most solemn oaths were habitually disregarded.

When the vast assembly had dispersed, and the defeated tyrant found himself again in Windsor Castle, attended only by some of the foreign adventurers who still hung about his person, he gave vent to all the suppressed passion of his soul. In transports of impotent rage, he uttered fearful curses against the deed which had been done, and against those who had forced him to do it; he rolled his eyes and gnashed his teeth like one insane, and restlessly strode about his chamber gnawing sticks and stones. So say the chroniclers, and the account may readily be believed: a depraved heart, hardened by a long course of crime and cruelty, would probably display itself in an outburst of passion in colours such as these. His attendants, the slaves of his gold, who saw their career of robbery and injustice suddenly cut short, incited the king to vengeance for the humiliation he had sustained, and counselled him to resist the Charter, and to take measures for the recovery of his power. John, released from his immediate fears, listened to their advice, and sent two of them to the Continent to carry out the schemes they proposed. One of them took his way to Rome to appeal to the Pope for prompt and efficient aid; the other proceeded to Flanders, Gascony, and among the former Continental vassals of the king, to hire fresh bodies of mercenaries, and to bring them over to England. Meanwhile the king entered secretly into communication with all the governors of castles who were foreigners, ordering them to lay up stores of provisions, and keep themselves prepared for defence, "doing this without noise and with caution, for fear of alarming the barons."

The barons did not yet know what hard and unremitting effort the struggle for liberty demands. They looked upon the work as done, when, in fact, it was only beginning; and on their departure from Runnymede they appointed a grand tournament to be held on the 2nd of July at Stamford, in celebration of their joy. No sooner did he hear of their intention, than John threw to the winds the oaths he had taken, and formed a plot to seize possession of London during the absence of the nobles. The scheme, however, was communicated to them, and the tournament was arranged to take place nearer the capital. The king now proceeded to Winchester, when some deputies from the barons presently demanded an interview with him. They required an explanation of the line of conduct, ambiguous, if not treacherous, which he had adopted since the signing of the Charter. John met them with the hollow smile which he was accustomed to put on at such times, and assured them that their suspicions were unfounded, and that he was prepared to fulfil all that he had promised. The barons withdrew, little satisfied by these assertions, and the king took his way to the Isle of Wight, where he remained for three weeks. Here he refused all companionship but that of the fishermen and sailors of the place, whose manners he adopted, with the view of making himself popular among them. To a certain extent he seems to have succeeded; and during the struggle which soon afterwards took place, the English sailors proved generally true to his cause.

In July, John was at Oxford; but after a stay of a few days he again turned to the south, and proceeded to Dover, where he remained, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the mercenaries whom he expected from the Continent. During the month of September, the barons learnt that troops were landing in small bodies, with little noise, but in a manner which indicated a well-organised confederacy. William d'Albini was then sent with a picked force of men-at-arms to seize upon the royal castle at Rochester. Having done so, he found it extremely ill-furnished with stores or means of defence; and in this condition it was besieged by John, who had quitted Dover with an army from various parts of the Continent. Each day brought new reinforcements across the Channel, and their numbers so greatly increased that when the barons quitted London to the relief of Rochester, they were compelled to turn back before the superior force opposed to them. It seemed as though the elements themselves could alone check this invasion of banditti. A certain Hugh de Boves, one of their leaders, had embarked from Calais with a vast force of his irregular troops, when a storm arose, against which the unskilful mariners were quite helpless, and the whole of the ships, with those on board, were destroyed. John heard of this loss with another burst of rage, but he still pressed on the siege of Rochester, and succeeded in preventing all succour from reaching it. D'Albini maintained the defence for eight weeks with unshaken determination, and it was not until the outer wall of the castle had been beaten down, and the garrison reduced to the last extremity by famine, that he threw open the gates. John immediately ordered the brave commander to be hanged with all his men; but Peter de Mauley, the leader of one of the foreign bands, opposed this command, because he feared the acts of retaliation which it would certainly provoke on the part of the English. The tyrant, shorn of his power on all sides, was compelled to submit his barbarous will to the decision of the foreign chief. The prisoners of inferior rank were butchered by the king's orders, but the knights were spared, and were sent for imprisonment to the strong castles of Corfe and Nottingham.

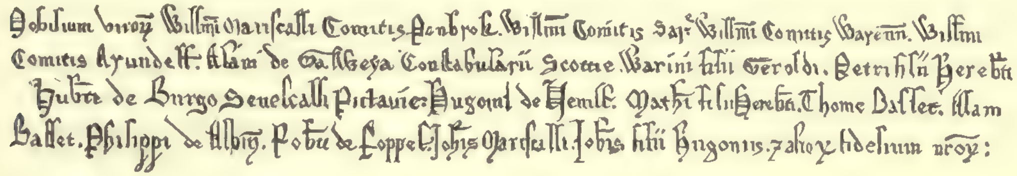
The Pope now responded to the application of

John by declaring himself against the English nation, and issuing sentence of excommunication against the barons. He asserted that they were worse than Saracens, for daring to rebel against a vassal of the Holy See, a religious monarch who had taken up the cross. This decision of the Pope, together with the success at Rochester, gave John new courage, and he marched northward to St. Albans, accompanied by the immense force which, composed of many races, and presenting striking contrasts of appearance and accoutrements, possessed one common attribute of unredeemed ferocity. The citizens of London, who were among the first to join in the struggle for right, were also among the bravest to maintain it, and as the foreign hordes swept by the city, showed an undaunted front, which deterred the king from attacking them. From St. Albans he passed on towards Nottingham, encouraging his soldiers to seize their pay from the wretched inhabitants of the country. The northern counties had long been the chief seat of disaffection, and now Alexander, the young King of Scotland, who had concluded an alliance with the English barons, crossed the borders with an army, and laid siege to the castle of Norham. John saw the means of vengeance in his hands, and he determined to use them to the utmost. A few days after the feast of Christmas, when the ground was covered with snow, he marched from Nottingham into Yorkshire, laying waste the country and meeting with no opposition. True to the instincts of his base and malignant character, he became more ruthless in proportion to the helplessness of his victims. Every house and village on the road were destroyed, the king himself giving the example, and setting fire with his own hands in the morning to the roof which had sheltered him during the night. The fury of the savage horde did not end there. The inhabitants, driven from their homes, were plundered of everything they possessed, and often butchered upon their own hearthstones. Others, less happy, were subjected to torture to make them give up their hidden stores of money.

RUNNYMEDE, FROM COOPER'S HILL.

The expedition of John to the north, like that of William the Conqueror through the same district, was one long course of rapine and cruelty;

castles and towns were burned to the ground, and the path of the king was marked by a trail of blood among heaps of blackened ruins. The young King of Scots retired before the vast force brought against him, and John pushed his way to Edinburgh. Here he found himself in danger of attack, and, as was usual with him in such cases, he at once turned back, and recrossed the border. Among the towns burnt up by the king during this expedition were Alnwick, Morpeth, Mitford, Roxburgh, Berwick, Haddington, and Dunbar. A division of his forces had been left in the south to oppose the barons, and keep in check the citizens of London; and this division, reinforced by fresh arrivals from the Continent, made predatory incursions through the southern counties, marking their course with equal ferocity. The only distinction between their conduct and that of the king, appears to have been that the castles which fell into their hands were occupied by some one of their number, instead of being destroyed.



SPECIMEN OF THE WRITING OF THE GREAT CHARTER.

Meanwhile, further measures had been taken by the Church against the insurgent barons. The Abbot of Abingdon, with other ecclesiastics, in obedience to the tyrant and the Pope who supported him, fulminated a second sentence of excommunication, in which Robert Fitz-Walter, the chief of the confederacy, with many others of the most powerful nobles, were mentioned by name, and an interdict was placed upon the city of London. The measure was not without its effect upon certain classes of the country people, but the courage and intelligence of the citizens of London rose superior to the thunder of Rome. In defiance of the interdict they dared still to offer their prayers to Heaven, and to keep the solemn festival of Christmas; the churches remained open, and the bells still rang out the note of freedom.

But dangers were thickening on every side around them. The barons saw themselves hemmed in by increasing hordes of foreigners, and at the same time had reason to fear the effect of the excommunication upon the mass of the people. It does not appear that there was among the nobles any man of sufficient influence or military genius to break through the obstacles by which they were surrounded. Many councils were held and schemes proposed, only to be laid aside as unfeasible. At length the barons determined to offer the English throne to Prince Louis, the eldest son of Philip of France. Such a step scarcely admits of excuse under any circumstances; but the barons, unable of themselves to wrest the power from John, might not improbably consider that any change would be to their advantage, and that it would be better for the country to be under the rule even of the son of their ancient enemy, than to submit to a tyrant who had lost every attribute of manhood.

Louis had married Blanche of Castile, who was the niece of John, and thus he might pretend to some shadow of a title to the crown. The barons also considered that, if he landed in England, many of the foreign mercenaries, who were subjects of France, would be detached from the cause of John, and would join the standard of their prince. When the proposal was carried to the court of France, it was received by the king and his son with that degree of exultation which might have been anticipated. Louis was anxious to sail for England immediately; but Philip, with more wisdom and caution, demanded that twenty-four hostages, the flower of the English nobility, should first be sent to Paris, in assurance of the fidelity of the barons. A French fleet then sailed up the river Thames, and arrived at London in February (1216), conveying a small army, which formed the first detachment of the French forces. The commander informed the barons that Prince Louis would arrive in person at the approaching feast of Easter.

The Pope—true to the cause he had embraced—no sooner heard of these preparations than he sent a new legate into England, who, as he passed through France, boldly remonstrated with the king and his son upon the course they were pursuing. Once more England was called the patrimony of St. Peter, and Philip was asked how he dared to attack it, and was threatened with immediate excommunication in case he persisted in doing so. Louis immediately set up a claim to the English throne in right of his wife; and, leaving the legate in astonishment at this new view of the matter, he escaped from further argument, and took his way to Calais. Having collected a great army, well furnished with stores, he embarked them on board 680 vessels, and set sail from Calais at the appointed time. The English sailors of the Cinque Ports, on whom the efforts of John to secure their good will had not been thrown away, lay in wait for an opportunity of inflicting damage on the invaders, and a storm having arisen by which the French fleet became scattered, they took advantage of the circumstance, and cut off and captured some of the ships. The rest of the fleet arrived safely at Sandwich, where Louis landed on the 30th of May.

John had arrived at Dover with a large army; but so far from attempting to prevent the landing of the French, he made a rapid retreat at the news of their approach. His own unhappy subjects, however, were not in a position to oppose him; them he could attack and slaughter in safety, and accordingly, wheresoever his army passed, the same cruelties were practised, the same ravages committed as before. He went to Guildford, whence he proceeded to Bristol by way of Winchester. Meanwhile, Louis led his forces to Rochester Castle, which he besieged and captured, and then passed on to London. The French prince entered the capital on the 2nd of June, 1216, and was received with the greatest demonstrations of joy by rich and poor. A magnificent procession was formed to accompany him to St. Paul's Church, and there, after he had offered up his prayers, the barons of the kingdom and the citizens paid him the vows of homage. He then placed his hand upon a copy of the Gospels, and swore to restore to the country its just and righteous laws, and to each man the lands or property of which he had been despoiled.

One of the first acts of Louis was to issue a manifesto, which was addressed to the King of Scotland and to all the owners of land throughout the country who were not then present in London. The result of this proclamation soon made itself apparent. Any jealousy towards a foreign prince was entirely subdued by the deep hatred with which all classes of the people regarded their king. The force of an idea was not then so great as in more recent times; the confederacy of the barons, notwithstanding the high and just cause for which they fought, was weak, because it was without a powerful and recognised head. No sooner had the people a living man round whom to rally, instead of a collection of names, than they at once flocked to join his standard. Of the few nobles who had accompanied John on his marauding expeditions, nearly all quitted him at once, and took their way to London; all the people of the northern counties rose up among the ruins of their homes, and cried aloud for vengeance; the King of Scotland prepared an army to march once more to the south; and the foreign mercenaries, with the exception of the Gascons and Poitevins, renounced their adhesion to the tyrant, and either quitted the country or joined the forces of Louis and the barons. Dangers thickened about the king on every side, and his abject spirit was sustained only by the consolations which Gualo, the Pope's legate, poured into his ear. The legate assured him of the constant support of the Pope, and exhorted him to courage, since it was impossible that any harm could happen to a prince who was under the protection of Holy Church. But now the news arrived that Pope Innocent, whose efforts alone had sustained the tyrant in his power, was dead, and a considerable time elapsed before his successor was appointed.

Louis marched his forces to Dover, and laid siege to the castle, which was in the hands of Hubert de Burgh, a man whose character stands so high in history that we are at a loss to understand how he should have retained his allegiance to John. He, however, proved his loyalty by maintaining a most gallant defence, and effectually repelled all the attacks of the besiegers. Mention is made of a formidable engine of war, called a *malvoisin*, or *bad neighbour*, which was sent by Philip to be used by his son at the siege of Dover. Neither this engine nor the bravery of the attacking troops availed anything against the strong walls of the castle and the obstinate defence of the garrison; and, after a siege which lasted several weeks, Louis was compelled to desist from the attack, and he determined to reduce the place by famine. Meanwhile, a number of the barons had laid siege to Windsor Castle, which also made a vigorous defence. The king availed himself of the moment when they were thus occupied to advance upon their estates, where he let loose the greedy adventurers who still remained in his pay. The barons then raised the siege to attack the king, who made a hasty retreat. Having succeeded in eluding their pursuit, he reached the town of Stamford. The barons made no attempt to molest him there, but turned and took their way to Dover, where they joined the forces of Louis.

Dover Castle still held out, and the prince pertinaciously maintained his position before it, thus losing three months of valuable time, which, had it been well employed, would doubtless have placed him in possession of the throne. In such a case, inactivity necessarily produced discontent, and other causes of complaint soon presented themselves to the English barons. Louis, who showed himself as deficient in policy as in military skill, began to treat the English with disrespect, and made grants of land and titles in England to his own countrymen. At the same time an event occurred, or was believed to have occurred—and in either case the result was the same—which was calculated to destroy at once the bonds of alliance which existed between the barons and the French prince. One of the followers of Louis, named the Viscount de Melun, being seized with illness at London, and finding himself at the point of death, earnestly desired to see those English nobles who remained in the city. When they approached his bedside, he informed them that the prince, with sixteen of his principal barons, had sworn that when the kingdom should be conquered and Louis crowned, all the English who had joined his standard should be banished for ever, as traitors not to be trusted, and their offspring exterminated or reduced to poverty. "Doubt not my words," De Melun said, with his dying breath; "I, who lie here about to die, was one of the conspirators." Whether this extraordinary scene did or did not take place, the report greatly increased the discontent among the barons. Several of them quitted the standard of Louis, and those who remained appear to have done so merely as the alternative of again tendering their support to John.

While such was the condition of affairs in the French camp, it is evident that there was nothing to oppose the king in his lawless course of vengeance. He advanced with his troops to Lincoln, and having made himself master of the town, he established his headquarters there, and rallied around him fugitive bands of his mercenaries. His chief support was derived from the adherence of the seamen of the country, who appear to have remained firm in their resistance to the French invasion. Many ships laden with stores on their way from the Continent were captured by them, and thus the army of Louis found itself frequently deprived of supplies. In the month of October the king set out on another predatory excursion, which was destined to be his last. Leaving Lincoln, he passed through the district of Croyland, burning up the farmhouses attached to the abbey of that name. Then, proceeding eastward, he went to Lynn and Wisbech, whence he reached the Cross Keys, a place on the south side of the Wash. At low water the sands of this estuary are dry, so as to admit of a passage across for horses and vehicles; but it is liable to a sudden influx of the tide. For some reason which does not very clearly appear, John determined to cross the Wash at the Cross Keys, and in doing so he narrowly escaped the fate of Pharaoh. When his troops had nearly reached the opposite shore, they heard the roar of the rising tide. The king, alarmed, hastened his steps, and succeeded in reaching dry ground; but on looking back, he saw all the carriages and sumpter-horses which carried his stores and treasure overwhelmed by the waters. The waves dashed and leaped over them, and presently carriages, horses, and men, all disappeared in the whirlpool caused by the confluence of the tide and of the current of the river Welland.

Giving vent to his rage by curses and complaints, John took his way gloomily to the Abbey of Cistercians at Swineshead, where he remained for the night. At supper he is said to have eaten to excess of peaches, or pears, and drank great quantities of new cider. A story was current, some fifty years later, that he was poisoned by the monks, but no allusion is made to it in the accounts of his contemporaries; and it is equally probable that his death resulted from excess, acting upon a body already fevered by excitement. He was attacked during the night by severe illness, and on mounting his horse early next morning he found himself unable to sit upright. A horse-litter was then procured, in which he was conveyed to the neighbouring castle of Sleaford. A burning fever, attended with acute pains, had seized upon him; and it was with great difficulty that, on the following day, he was carried to the castle of Newark on the Trent. The shadow of coming death now appeared upon his face, and he desired that a confessor might be sent for. The abbey of Croxton was not far distant, and on receiving the message, the abbot attended to witness the last moments of the king, and to offer him such consolation as he had to bestow. The chroniclers describe the wretched tyrant as dying in an extremity of agony and remorse. He appointed his eldest son Henry as his successor, and a letter was written under his direction to Honorius III., the newly-elected Pope, entreating protection for his children. He caused his attendants to swear fealty to Henry, and sent orders to the sheriffs and other royal officers throughout the kingdom to render the prince their obedience. In his last moments, the abbot asked where he desired that his body should be buried, and John replied, "I commit my soul to God, and my body to St. Wulstan." He died on the 18th of October, 1216, in the forty-ninth year of his age, having reigned seventeen years. His body was conveyed to the cathedral church of Worcester, of which St. Wulstan was the patron saint, and was there buried.

The character of John has been shown only too clearly in the records of those miserable years during which he occupied the throne. It is unquestionable that the very circumstances which entailed so much misery upon the people under his rule were ultimately of the greatest benefit to the country, and that the cowardice and tyranny of John produced results of far more importance to the welfare of the English nation than the high military talent and abilities of his predecessors. Yet, however highly we may estimate the national blessings which have followed in the train of Magna Charta, we cannot be blind to the fact, that, like every other triumph of freedom, it was bought with tears and blood.

THE DISASTER TO JOHN'S ARMY AT THE WASH. (*See p.* 275.)

WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL. *(From a photograph by Frith and Co.)*

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE REIGN OF HENRY III.

Accession of the King—Renewal of the Great Charter—Messages of Conciliation—Battle of Lincoln—Destruction of the French Fleet—Departure of Louis—Reduction of Albemarle—Resumption of the Royal Castles—War with France—Characters of Richard of Cornwall and Henry III.—Fall of Hubert de Burgh—Peter des Roches—Henry is his own Minister—The House of Provence—The King's Marriage Articles—The Marriage and Entry into London—Influx of Foreigners—Papal Aggressions—Persecution of the Jews—Oppression of the Londoners—A Religious Ceremony.

HENRY III., or, as he was more generally designated, Henry of Winchester, was only ten years of age when the death of his father called him to the throne. It was almost an empty honour, the kingdom being in a most distracted state. London and the southern counties acknowledged the authority of his rival Louis, to whom the King of Scotland and the Welsh prince had taken the oath of fealty as vassals.

In this position there were only two parties on whom the youthful monarch could rely for any effectual support: the first consisted of the barons and foreign mercenaries who had remained faithful to the late king; the second was the Papal See, which, since the degrading surrender of the crown by John, considered itself lord paramount of England, and in that capacity naturally exerted all its influence to secure the succession to the son of him who had bestowed upon it so rich a gift.

About ten days after the death of his father, Henry was conducted to the abbey church of Gloucester; and having taken the coronation oath, and sworn fealty to the reigning Pope, Honorius, was crowned by his legate Gualo and the Bishops of Winchester, Exeter, and Bath, who placed upon his head a simple circlet of gold, the regal crown having been lost with the rest of the royal treasures in the disastrous passage of the Wash.

Immediately after this ceremony a proclamation was issued, in which the boy-king lamented the dissensions between his father and the barons, which he professed his willingness to forget, and offered to his subjects full amnesty for the past, and their liberties, as secured by the Great Charter for the future. He also commanded the tenants of the crown to do homage to him for their possessions, and take the oath of allegiance. During a month the people were forbidden to appear in public without a white fillet round the head in honour of his coronation. The care of Henry's person was confided to the Earl of Pembroke, Earl Marshal of England, who was also named guardian of the kingdom. Well did this illustrious nobleman merit the confidence reposed in him. It was owing to his loyalty and energy that the foreigners were driven from the kingdom. The earl, in order that he might reconcile all orders in the state to the government of the new king, made him grant a fresh charter, which, though copied in most instances from the one extorted from John, contained several exceptions. The privilege of elections granted to the clergy was not confirmed, nor the liberty of withdrawing from the kingdom without the consent of the crown. In this omission we may perceive the germ of resistance to the supremacy of Rome. Even at a period when it was most necessary to conciliate its influence in favour of the young king, both the regent and the barons of the party were desirous of reserving the right of the crown to issue the *congé d'élire* to the monks and chapters, as some check upon the encroachments of the Papacy. But the greatest change was the omission of the obligations to which John had subscribed, binding himself not to levy any aids or scutages, as they were termed, upon the nation without the consent of the Great Council; the article was even pronounced severe, and was expressly left to future deliberation. This charter was confirmed by the king in the following year, and several additional articles added, to prevent the oppression of the sheriffs. The forest laws were modified; those forests which had been enclosed since the reign of Henry II. were thrown open; offences against the forest laws were declared no longer capital, but punished by fine and imprisonment. These last ameliorations were made in a separate charter.

Whilst the Earl of Pembroke, by these wise proceedings, gave so much satisfaction to the nation in general, he made great personal efforts to recall the revolted barons to their allegiance by writing in the king's name to each. In his letters he reminded them that whatever cause of offence John might have given them, his son, who had succeeded to the crown, inherited neither his principles nor resentments; that he was the lineal heir of their ancient kings; and pointed out how desperate was the expedient they had employed in calling in a foreign potentate—an expedient which, happily for them and the nation, had failed of success. It was, he reminded them, still in their power, by a speedy return to their duty, to restore the independence of the kingdom, and those liberties for which they had so zealously contended; adding that, as all their past offences were now buried in oblivion, they ought, on their part, to show equal magnanimity, and forget their complaints against their late sovereign, who, if he had been in any way blamable in his conduct, had left to his successor the salutary warning to avoid the paths which had led to such fatal and dangerous extremities. The considerations so temperately yet strongly urged, enforced by the high character for honour and consistency which Pembroke had ever maintained, had great influence with the barons, many of whom began secretly to negotiate with him, whilst others returned openly to their allegiance.

The suspicion which Louis discovered of their fidelity forwarded this general inclining towards the king; and when at last he refused the government of the castle of Hertford to Robert Fitz-Walter, one of his most faithful adherents, who claimed that fortress as his property, they plainly saw that the English nobility were to be systematically excluded from every position of trust, and that his own countrymen and foreigners engrossed all the confidence and affection of their new sovereign.

The excommunication, too, which the legate of the Pope had pronounced against all the adherents of Louis, was not without effect. Men were easily convinced of the impiety of a cause which it was their interest to abandon.

Louis, who, on the death of John, had deemed his triumph certain, found, on the contrary, that that event had given an incurable wound to his cause. On his return from France, where he had been to recruit his forces, he discovered his party among the English barons much weakened. The Earls of Salisbury, Arundel, and Warrenne, together with William Marshal, eldest son of the Earl of Pembroke, had returned to their natural allegiance, and the nobles who remained were only waiting an occasion to follow their example.

The regent felt himself so much strengthened by these accessions to the royal cause, that he resolved no longer to remain on the defensive, and at once proceeded to invest Mountsorrel; but on the approach of the Count de la Perche with the French army, he raised the siege, his forces not being sufficient to oppose him.

Elated with this success, the count marched to Lincoln, and being admitted within the walls, proceeded at once to attack the castle, which he soon reduced to great extremity. Fully sensible of the importance of relieving the place, the gallant Pembroke summoned all his forces from every quarter of the kingdom which owned the authority of Henry; and with such alacrity were his orders obeyed, that in a short time he marched upon Lincoln with an army superior in numbers to the French, who, in their turn, shut themselves within the walls. The earl reinforced the garrison, which made a vigorous assault upon the besiegers, whilst with his own army he, at the same time, attacked the town, which the English entered, sword in hand, bearing down all opposition. Lincoln was given up to pillage, the French being totally defeated.

It is singular that the only persons slain were the Count de la Perche and two of his officers, but many of the principal leaders and upwards of 400 knights were taken prisoners; and yet this battle, if it may be considered worthy of the name, decided the fate of the kingdom.

Louis heard of this event, so fatal to his ambitious projects, while engaged in the siege of Dover, which, under the command of Hubert de Burgh, still held out against him, and instantly retreated to London, the stronghold of his party. Shortly after his arrival, intelligence was brought him of a fresh disaster, which completely put an end to his hopes of the conquest of England.

His consort, Blanche of Castile, had levied powerful reinforcements in France, which she had embarked in eighty large vessels, besides galleys and smaller ships, under the command of a noted pirate named Eustace the Monk.

To meet this formidable danger, Hubert de Burgh, the justiciary, collected forty sail from the Cinque Ports, and set out to sea to meet the enemy. So inferior was his force that several knights refused to follow him, alleging as a reason, or rather an excuse for their cowardice, that they were unacquainted with naval warfare, and bound only to fight on land by the tenure of their lands. It was on this occasion that Hubert executed one of those extraordinary feats which only true genius can conceive. On coming in sight of the French fleet, he commanded his own ships to sail past them, as if he intended to surprise Calais. The enemy saw him pass them with shouts of derision. To their astonishment, however, the English fleet suddenly tacked, and, with the wind in their favour, bore down upon them in a line on the rear. The battle began with volleys of arrows, which, most probably, did little execution on either side. It was when they came in close contact that the superiority of the British sailors was shown. With chains and hooks they lashed their vessels to those of the enemy, then scattered clouds of quicklime in the air, which the wind carried in the eyes of the French, half blinding them, and rendered their ships unmanageable by cutting the rigging with their axes. The struggle was not a long one. The French, unused to this desperate mode of fighting, made but a feeble resistance; and of their immense fleet fifteen vessels only escaped, the rest being either sunken or taken.

After this signal triumph, the barons who still adhered to the cause of Louis hastened to make their peace, in order to prevent the attainders which longer resistance might have brought upon them; and the French prince, seeing that his affairs were desperate, began to feel anxious for the safety of his person, and most desirous of withdrawing from a contest where everything wore a hostile aspect to him. He concluded a treaty with the Earl of Pembroke, by which he promised to quit the kingdom, merely stipulating for an indemnity to the adherents who remained faithful to him, a restitution of their honours and fortunes, as well as the enjoyment of those liberties which had been granted in the late charter to the rest of the nation. Thus, owing to the great prudence and loyalty of the regent, was ended a civil war which at one time threatened to subjugate England to a foreign yoke.

After the expulsion of the French, the prudence and equity of the protector's subsequent conduct contributed to cure entirely those wounds which had been made by intestine discord. He received the rebellious barons into favour, observed strictly the terms of peace which he had granted them; restored them to their possessions; and endeavoured, by an equal behaviour, to bury all past animosities in perpetual oblivion. The clergy alone, who had adhered to Louis, were sufferers in this revolution. As they had rebelled against their spiritual sovereign, by disregarding the interdict and excommunication, it was not in

Pembroke's power to make any stipulations in their favour; and Gualo, the legate, prepared to take vengeance on them for their disobedience. Many of them were deposed, many suspended, some banished; and all who escaped punishment made atonement for their offence by paying large sums to the legate, who amassed an immense treasure by this expedient.

The Earl of Pembroke died in 1219, soon after the pacification which had been secured by his wisdom and valour; and he was succeeded in the government by Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester, and Hubert de Burgh, the justiciary. The counsels of the latter were chiefly followed; and had he possessed equal authority in the kingdom with Pembroke, he seemed to be in every way worthy of filling the place of that virtuous nobleman. But the licentious and powerful barons, who had once broken the reins of subjection to their prince, and had obtained by violence an enlargement of their liberties and independence, could ill be restrained by laws under a minority; and the people, no less than the king, suffered from their outrages and disorders. They retained by force the royal castles, which they had seized during the past convulsions, or which had been committed to their custody by the protector; they usurped the king's demesnes; they oppressed their vassals; they infested their weaker neighbours; they invited all disorderly people to enter in their retinue, and to live upon their lands; and they gave them protection in all their robberies and extortions.

No one was more infamous for these violent and illegal practices than the Earl of Albemarle; who, though he had early returned to his duty, and had been serviceable in expelling the French, augmented to the utmost the general disorder, and committed outrages in all the counties of the north. In order to reduce him to obedience, Hubert seized an opportunity of getting possession of Rockingham Castle, which Albemarle had garrisoned with his licentious retinue; but this nobleman, instead of submitting, entered into a secret confederacy with Falkes de Breauté, and other barons, fortified the castle of Beham for his defence, and made himself master of that of Fotheringay. Pandulph, who had been re-appointed legate, showed great activity in the suppression of this rebellion. With the consent of eleven bishops, he pronounced sentence of excommunication against Albemarle and his adherents; an army was levied; a scutage of ten shillings—a knight's fee—was imposed on all the military tenants. Albemarle's adherents, terrified by the vigour of these proceedings, gradually deserted him, and he himself was reduced to sue for mercy. But such was his influence, and the unsettled state of the nation, that he not only received a free pardon, but was restored to his whole estate. Shortly afterwards (1221) Stephen Langton obtained the recall of Pandulph to Rome, and for eight years Hubert de Burgh was at the head of affairs.

The state of weakness into which the crown had fallen made it imperative for the ministers to use every exertion for the preservation of what remained of the royal prerogative, as well as to ensure the public liberties. Hubert applied to the Pope, the lord paramount of England, to issue a bull by which Henry was declared of age and entitled to govern. It was granted, and the justiciary resigned into the hands of the youthful sovereign the important fortresses of the Tower of London and Dover Castle, which had been committed to his custody, and at the same time called upon those barons who held similar trusts to imitate his example.

The nobles refused compliance; and the Earls of Chester and Albemarle, John de Lacy, Brian de L'Isle, and William de Cautel even entered into a conspiracy to surprise London, and assembled in arms at Waltham with that purpose; but finding the king prepared to meet them, they at last desisted from their intention. When summoned to appear at court to answer for their conduct, the rebels appeared, and not only confessed their design, but told Henry that, though they had no bad intentions against his person, they were determined to remove the justiciary, Hubert de Burgh, from his office. A second time they met in arms at Leicester with the same intention; but the primate and bishops, finding everything tending towards civil war, interposed their authority, and menaced them with excommunication if they persisted in detaining the king's castles. This threat prevailed, and most of the fortresses were surrendered. The barons complained bitterly that the justiciary's castle was soon afterwards restored to him, whilst their castles were retained. De Burgh seized the opportunity to ruin Falkes de Breauté. Accused of laying hands on one of the lords justices, he was besieged and taken prisoner at Bedford and condemned to perpetual exile (1224).

Notwithstanding the disturbed state of his kingdom, Henry found himself obliged to carry on war against France, and for this purpose employed the subsidy of a fifteenth which had been

DEFEAT OF FRENCH FLEET IN ENGLISH CHANNEL.

granted him. His former rival, now king of that country under the title of Louis VIII., instead of complying with Henry's claim for Normandy, which he had promised to restore, entered Poitou, took La Rochelle, after an obstinate siege, and seemed determined to expel the English from such provinces as remained to them in France. The king sent over his uncle, the Earl of Salisbury, and his brother, Prince Richard, whom he had created Earl of Cornwall. They succeeded in arresting the progress of Louis and retained the Gascon vassals in their allegiance, but no great action was fought on either side. Poitou, however, remained French. The Earl of Cornwall, after remaining two years in Guienne, returned to England.

This prince was nowise turbulent or factious in his disposition: his ruling passion was to amass money, in which he succeeded so well as to become the richest person in Christendom; yet his attention to gain threw him sometimes into acts of violence, and gave great trouble to the government. There was a manor, which had formerly belonged to the earldom of Cornwall, but had been granted to Waleran de Ties before Richard had been invested with that dignity, and while the earldom remained in the crown. Richard claimed this manor, and expelled the proprietor by force; Waleran complained. The king ordered his brother to do justice to the man, and restore him to his rights; the earl said that he would not submit to these orders till the cause should be decided against him by the judgment of his peers. Henry replied that it was first necessary to reinstate Waleran in possession before the cause could be tried, and reiterated his orders to the earl. We may judge of the state of the government, when this affair had nearly produced a civil war. The Earl of Cornwall, finding Henry peremptory in his commands, associated himself with the young Earl of Pembroke, who had married his sister, and who was displeased on account of the king's requiring him to deliver up some royal castles which were in his custody. These two malcontents took into the confederacy the Earls of Chester, Warrenne, Gloucester, Hereford, Warwick, and Ferrers, who were all disgusted on a like account. They assembled an army, which the king had not the power or courage to resist; and he was obliged to give his brother satisfaction by grants of much greater importance than the manor, which had been the first ground of the quarrel.

The character of the king, as he grew to man's estate, became every day better known, and he was found in every respect unqualified for maintaining a proper sway among those turbulent barons whom the feudal constitution subjected to his authority. Gentle, humane, and merciful even to a fault, he seems to have been steady in no other circumstance of his character, but to have received every impression from those who surrounded him, and whom he loved, for the time, with the most imprudent and most unreserved affection. Without activity or vigour, he was unfit to conduct war; without policy or art, he was ill suited to maintain peace; his resentments, though hasty and violent, were not dreaded, while he was found to drop them with such facility; his friendships were little valued, because they were neither derived from choice nor maintained with constancy. His true place was in a proper pageant of state in a regular monarchy, where his ministers could have conducted all affairs in his name; but he was too feeble in those disorderly times to sway a sceptre, whose weight depended entirely on the firmness of the hand which held it. The ablest and most virtuous monitor that ever Henry possessed was Hubert de Burgh, a man who had been faithful to the crown in the most difficult and dangerous times, and yet showed no desire, even when at the height of power, to enslave or oppress the people. He was aided in his patriotic government by Stephen Langton, whose death in 1228 was a grave blow to the national party.

Hubert, while he enjoyed his authority, had an entire ascendency over Henry, and was loaded with honours and favours beyond any other subject. Besides acquiring the property of many castles and manors, he married the eldest sister of the King of Scots, was created Earl of Kent, and, by an unusual concession, was made chief justiciary of England for life; yet Henry, in a sudden caprice, threw off this faithful minister, and exposed him to the persecutions of his enemies (1232). Among other frivolous crimes objected to him, he was accused of gaining the king's affections by enchantment, and of purloining from the royal treasury a gem, which had the virtue to render the wearer invulnerable, and of sending this valuable curiosity to the Prince of Wales. The nobility, who hated Hubert on account of his zeal in asserting the rights and restoring the possessions of the crown, no sooner saw the opportunity favourable, than they inflamed the king's animosity against him, and pushed him to seek the total ruin of his minister. Hubert took sanctuary in a church; but the king ordered him to be dragged from thence. He recalled those orders; he afterwards renewed them. He was obliged by the clergy to restore Hubert to the sanctuary. He constrained him soon after to surrender himself prisoner, and confined him in the castle of Devizes. In 1234 Hubert was again restored to favour, but never showed any inclination to reinstate himself in power and authority.

Hubert's successor in the government of the kingdom and the favour of the king was his rival, Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester, a Poitevin by birth—a prelate who had been greatly favoured by John, and was no less distinguished by his arbitrary principles than by his great courage and abilities. He had been nominated justiciary and regent of England by King John, during an expedition which that monarch made into France; and there is little doubt that his illegal and oppressive administration was one of the causes of that combination amongst the barons which finally extorted from the crown the Great Charter, and laid the foundation of the English constitution. Henry, though incapable, from the weakness of his character, of pursuing the same violent course as his father had done, inherited all his arbitrary principles, and, by the advice of his new minister, invited over to England a great number of Poitevins and other foreigners, upon whom he conferred offices of considerable trust, as a means of counterbalancing the power of his nobility. Every post was confided to these strangers, who exhausted the revenues of the crown and invaded the rights of the people, till their insolence, which was even more offensive than their power, drew on them the hatred and envy of all classes of men throughout the kingdom. In this crisis, the barons acted in a manner worthy of the descendants of those who had wrung the charter of English freedom from the hands of the tyrant John. Their first act of open opposition to this odious ministry was to withdraw in a body from court, under pretence that they were exposed to danger from the machinations of these foreigners. When again summoned to attend, they demanded that the king should dismiss them, otherwise, they boldly declared, they would drive both him and them out of the kingdom, and place the crown upon the head of one more worthy to wear it. And when at last they attended an assembly at Westminster, it was so well attended that they seemed in a condition to prescribe laws both to the king and minister. Peter des Roches had, however, in the meantime found means of sowing dissension amongst them, and succeeded in bringing over to his party the Earls of Cornwall, Lincoln, and Chester. The patriot barons were disconcerted in their measures. Doubt crept in amongst them; they no longer acted in unity. Richard, the Earl Marshal, who had succeeded to that dignity on the death of his brother William, retired into Wales, from whence he withdrew to Ireland, where he was barbarously murdered by the contrivance of the Bishop of Winchester. The estates of the more obnoxious barons were confiscated without any legal sentence or trial by the peers, and bestowed with profuse liberality upon the Poitevins. Both sides now appealed to arms, and civil war began, in which the royal troops were worsted. Peter had even the insolence to say that the barons of England must not presume to put themselves on an equality with the barons of France, or assume the same liberties and privileges, the king of the former country having a more absolute power than the latter. In the opposition of the nobility, and the discontent of the people, we may trace the slow but gradual growth of civil liberty. True, the struggle for absolute power was frequently renewed, and sometimes with success, but that success was only temporary. The nation never really gave way; and once more the church came to the aid of the nation. Edmund, the primate, came to court, attended by many other prelates, and represented to the king the injustice of the measures pursued by Peter des Roches, the discontent and sufferings of the people, the ruin of his affairs, and after demanding the dismission of the obnoxious minister, threatened him with excommunication in the event of a refusal. Henry, who knew that in the event of the primate carrying his threat into execution the entire nation would side against him, was compelled to submit; the foreigners were banished from the kingdom, and the English restored to their places in the council.

The change for the better, however, was not of long continuance, as Henry became his own minister, and proved incapable of government. During the years which preceded the marriage of the king much discontent prevailed in England on account of the heavy taxes which continued to be imposed, although the refractory barons were subdued and the mercenary troops dismissed. The hostility of the king to the Great Charter, which he had so solemnly confirmed, excited the indignation of the people. The forest charter, for which the nation had paid one-fifteenth on all movables—a proof how eagerly they desired it—was scarcely more respected.

The house with which the king sought alliance was, undoubtedly, one of the most illustrious in Europe. Its remote ancestors were the Counts of Barcelona; but it was by Raymond Berenger, the first Count, or, as he is sometimes called, King of Provence, that the foundation of its greatness was laid. After rendering himself celebrated both as a warrior and a statesman, he died in 1131, and his estates were now governed by his great-grandson, Raymond III. Provence was distinguished very early for the honourable encouragement she gave to literature, especially the art of poetry, and so generally were her claims to superiority in this respect admitted, that Provençal became the popular term to distinguish the poetry of the *langue d'oc* from that of the *langue d'oil.* Richly, if we may judge from its effects, did the Counts of Provence recompense the poets of their country; for so munificent were their gifts to the troubadours who sought their court at Arles, that they gradually became impoverished. The poets have invented a singular legend to account for the subsequent wealth of Raymond. It was the least they could do to recompense him for his extravagant liberality in their favour; and a century later the legend found a place in that receptacle of religious tales and romances known as the "Gesta Romanorum." When Raymond, driven to despair by the sight of his empty coffers, was puzzling his brains with schemes for refilling them, a pilgrim, "*de fort bonne mine,*"* says the Abbé de Ruffi, to whom we are indebted for the story, came to the palace on his return from a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James. This stranger, after partaking of the hospitality of the count for some days, inquired into the value of his lands, the state of his finances, and finally offered to free him from every difficulty in a short time, provided that he was placed in absolute superintendence of all his affairs. To this proposal Raymond readily acceded, and the unknown pilgrim was forthwith placed in supreme authority over the household. And well did the stranger perform his promise: ere long, Raymond was freed from his embarrassments, and in a few years his coffers overflowed with wealth. But now gratitude began to fade from the fickle mind of the count, and he listened to the suspicious hints of his servants; until, altogether forgetful of the great benefits he had received at the hands of the unknown pilgrim, he commanded him to render up his accounts. The pilgrim made no objection; he exhibited his statements, and proved the integrity of his conduct so fully, that even his bitterest enemies could not answer a word. He then resumed his staff, scrip, and mantle, and, in despite of every entreaty of the repentant count, disappeared. Long, strict, and minute search was made after him, but he was never heard of more.

GREAT SEAL OF HENRY III.

The visit of this friendly pilgrim, we may suppose, was subsequent to the marriage of Raymond's daughter Eleanor, since Matthew Paris represents him as an "illustrious and valiant man"; but, through continual wars, almost all he

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* "Of a very agreeable appearance."

BANQUET AT THE MARRIAGE OF HENRY AND ELEANOR OF PROVENCE. *(See p. 287.)*

had had vanished from his treasury. The proposal, therefore, of the King of England was peculiarly grateful, both to Raymond and to his wife, Beatrice of Savoy, whose three brothers looked anxiously, even from the commencement of their niece's marriage treaty, to the broad lands and rich church preferment which they anticipated they should soon possess in wealthy but ill-governed England. It was, therefore, with eager joy that the proposal of Henry was accepted by the needy count; and with equally eager joy, judging from his haste, did the king transmit his instructions for the marriage articles. In these, he assigns to Eleanor, as dower, "Those cities, lands, and tenements, which it has been customary for other kings, our predecessors, to assign to other queens." He then proceeds to state, that if his sister Isabel should survive him, and should have recovered her dower, "then his procurators shall assign to Eleanor these towns: Gloster, Cambridge, and Huntingdon, and the villages of Wych, Basingstoke, Andover, Chiltham, Gumester, Clyne, Kingston, Ospringe, and Ludingland, to hold meanwhile;" and after Isabel's death, Eleanor in that case taking the usual dower, these towns should revert to the king. In respect of Eleanor's portion, which is stated to be 20,000 marks, he directs his embassy to agree with the count that the sum shall not be less than that promised; and in a subsequent instrument he grants full power to the procurators to receive it. In the secret instructions which immediately follow, Henry seems to have apprehended, that if he pressed the count for immediate payment of his daughter's portion, he might lose his chance of obtaining a wife. He therefore directs, that if his procurators cannot fulfil his commands to the very letter, they shall "over and above every power contained in the aforesaid letters, without the payment of the money appropriated for us, in whatever way ye can, take her with you, and safely and securely bring her to us in England." The youthful princess was accordingly placed in the hands of the ambassadors, and, amidst the rejoicings of the whole kingdom of Provence, she set forth, accompanied by a gallant cavalcade, in which were more than three hundred ladies on horseback. Her route lay through Navarre and France.

When Eleanor arrived on the frontier of France, she received a hospitable welcome from the queen dowager, and her son, who a short time previously had married an elder sister of the bride. The marriage train finally reached Dover, from whence it proceeded to Canterbury, where Henry awaited their coming. It was in that ancient city that the union took place, the service being performed by the Archbishop Edmund and the prelates who accompanied Eleanor. From Canterbury the newly-wedded pair set out for London, attended by a splendid array of nobles, prelates, knights, and ladies. On the 20th of January, being the feast of St. Fabian and St. Sebastian, Eleanor was crowned at Westminster with great splendour.

The historian, Matthew Paris, describes both the gallant array of the royal procession, and the gorgeous appearance which, even at that early period, was made by the city of London, with a minuteness which entitles him to the gratitude of every lover of antiquity:—

"There had assembled together so great a number of the nobility of both sexes, so great a number of religious orders, so great a concourse of the populace, and so great a variety of players, that London could scarcely contain them in her capacious bosom. Therefore was the city adorned with silk hangings, and with banners, crowns, palls, tapers, and lamps, and with certain marvellous ingenuities and devices; all the streets being cleaned from dirt, mud, sticks, and everything offensive.

"The citizens of London going to meet the king and queen, ornamented and trapped and wondrously sported their swift horses; and on the same day they went from the city to Westminster, that they might discharge the service of butler to the king in his coronation, which is acknowledged to belong to them of ancient right.

"They went in well-marshalled array, adorned in silken vestments, wrapped in gold-woven mantles, with fancifully-devised garments, sitting on valuable horses, refulgent with new bits and saddles: and they bore three hundred and sixty gold and silver cups, the King's trumpeters going before and sounding their trumpets; so that so wonderful a novelty produced a laudable astonishment in the spectators."

The worthy monk of St. Albans dilates with great gusto upon the splendour of the feast, and the order of the service of the different vassals of the crown, many of whom are called upon at a coronation to perform certain peculiar services down to the present day. He also remarks, with great complacency, that the abbot of his own convent took precedence of every other abbot in England at the dinner.

The following further and probably more accurate account is extracted from the City records (which are deeply interesting, as offering the earliest account of the ceremonies used at the coronation of a queen consort of England):

"In the twentieth year of the reign of King Henry, son of King John, Queen Eleanor, daughter of the Count of Provence, was crowned at Westminster, on the Sunday before the Purification, the King wearing his crown, and the bishops assisting. And these served in order in that most elegant and unheard-of feast:—the bishop of Chichester, the chancellor, with the cup of precious stones, which was one of the ancient regalia of the king, clothed in his pontificals, preceded the king, who was clad in royal attire, and wearing the crown. Hugh de Pateshall walked before with the patine, clothed in a dalmatica; and the Earls of Chester, Lincoln, and Warren, bearing the swords, preceded him. But the two renowned knights, Sir Richard Siward and Sir Nicholas de Molis, carried the two royal sceptres before the king; and the square purple cloth of silk, which was supported upon four silver lances, with four little bells of silver gilt, held over the king wherever he walked, was carried by the barons of the Cinque Ports; four being assigned to each lance, from the diversity of ports, that one port should not seem to be preferred before the other. The same in like manner bore a cloth of silk over the queen, walking behind the king, which said cloths they claimed to be theirs by right, and obtained them. And William de Beauchamp of Bedford, who had the office of almoner from times of old, found the striped cloth, or *burel*, which was laid down under the king's feet as he went from the hall as far as the pulpit of the church of Westminster; and that part of the cloth that was *within* the church always fell to the sexton, in whatever church the king was crowned; and all that was *without* the church was distributed among the poor, by the hands of William the almoner.

"At the king's table, on the right hand of the king, sat the archbishops, bishops, and certain abbots, who wished to be privileged at table; and on the left hand sat the earls, and some barons, although very few; but none claimed their seats by any right. And on that day the office of seneschal was served by Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, to whom the office by right belonged; and the office of the napery was that day served by Henry of Hastings, whose right it was of old to serve.

"Walter de Beauchamp, of Hammerlegh, laid the salt-cellar and the knives, and, after the banquet was at an end, received them as his fee.

"The Earl Warren served the office of butler in the stead of Hugh de Albini, Earl of Arundel; and under him was Michael Belot, whose right it was, as secondary, to hold the cup well replenished with wine to the Earl of Arundel, to be presented by that nobleman to the king when he might require it. Andrew Benkerel, who served the office of Mayor of London from 1231 to 1237, was at Westminster to serve in the butlery, with the 360 gold and silver cups, because the city of London is held to be the assistant to the chief butler, as the city of Winchester is represented in the same way in the kitchen to assist the high steward.

"The mayor, it seems, claimed Michael Belot's place of standing before the king, but was repulsed by Henry, who decided that the former should serve him.

"After the banquet the earl butler had the king's cup as his fee, and his assistant the earl's robe as his right.

"William de Beauchamp that day served the office of almoner, and had entire jurisdiction relative to the disputes and offences of the poor and lepers: so that, if one leper struck another with a knife, he could adjudge him to be burnt.

"After the banquet was finished, he received, as his right, the silver dish for alms that stood before the king; and he claimed to have one tun of wine in right of alms; and on that day the great chamberlain served the water, as well before as after the banquet—namely, Hugh de Vere, Earl of Oxford; and he received as his right, the basins and the towels wherewith he served. Gilbert, earl marshal, Earl of Strigul, served the office of the marshalsea; and it was his duty to appease tumults in the king's house, to give liveries to them, and to guard the entrances to the king's hall; and he received from every baron who was knighted by the king, and from every earl on that day, a palfrey with a saddle. The head cook of the royal kitchen always, at the coronation, received the steward's robe as his right; and of the aforesaid offices none claimed to themselves the right in the queen's house, except G. de Stamford, who said that he, in right of his predecessors, ought to be chamberlain to the queen and door-keeper of her chamber on that day, which he there obtained; and had, as his right, all the queen's furniture, as belonged to the chamberlain. . . . And the cloth which hung behind the king at table was claimed on the one side by the door-keepers, and on the other by the scullions, for themselves."

Such were the ceremonies which graced the marriage of Henry and Eleanor of Provence.

The king found a party far more difficult to manage than the Holy See, in his barons; for, having summoned a parliament to assemble at the Tower of London, they unanimously refused to attend, alleging as a reason that, surrounded as the king was with foreign and inimical counsellors, they could not with safety trust themselves in so strong and well-garrisoned a fortress.

HENRY III.

This excuse marks not only the great unpopularity of Henry, but the utter contempt into which his character for bad faith had fallen. It was in vain that he alternately threatened and remonstrated—the barons continued firm; and prudence prevailing over his self-will, he was obliged to yield the point, and returning to his palace at Westminster, held the parliament there.

Never did the church of Rome proceed with so little prudence, show such utter disregard of everything like justice, as during the reign of the obsequious Henry. The Pontiff, not content with the enormous sums of money which, under various pretences, he had drained from the kingdom, had the assurance to demand that 300 Italians should be preferred to English benefices. In vain did the primate, Edmund Rich, Archbishop of Canterbury, protest against the iniquitous measure; his patriotism called forth the resentment both of the king and the Pope. Wearied with the contest, he retired at last, a voluntary exile, to Pontigny, where he died.

Never was a system calculated to alienate the affections of a people from the Church more perseveringly pursued than by the court of Rome; it was that of the leech draining the life-blood of the nation on which it had fastened. Men began to question a religious system which manifested itself only in acts of injustice and oppression. In the universal condemnation of the grasping policy of the Pontiff, the seeds were sown which slowly but steadily ripened in the hearts of all who possessed the least sense of dignity and national independence.

Little, however, was the growing disaffection of his subjects heeded by Henry, exulting in the protection of the Holy See, which found in him a vassal worthy of her pretensions. He fasted both during Lent and on every Saturday throughout the year, and feasted right royally both at Easter and Christmas; keeping the festival of St. Edward most religiously, passing the whole night in the church, clothed in white.

But these observances could neither fill his exhausted exchequer nor conciliate the good will of the nation. The people murmured, the nobles were loud in their complaints; but Henry pertinaciously adhered to his foreign counsellors, and invited over many of the queen's relations, on whom he conferred both estates and benefices. The queen's uncles received enormous fortunes. William of Savoy was given the property of Richmond in Yorkshire, and was about to become bishop of Winchester, when he died suddenly. His bishopric and estates, to which were added the towns of Pevensey and Hastings, were handed on to Peter of Savoy. A third uncle, Boniface of Savoy, succeeded Edmund Rich as archbishop of Canterbury. In 1243, we find in the "Fœdera" a charter respecting Eleanor's dower, from which it appears that the appropriated dower of the Queens of England was not even at this period assigned her. In this she is assigned the town and castle of Gloucester, the cities of Worcester and Bath, the manors of Clyne and Chiltham; and instead of the manors assigned by the first charter, the whole county of Chester, together with Newcastle-under-Lyme, is granted.

This year Eleanor's mother visited England, for the purpose of bringing Sanchia, her third daughter, who was affianced to the king's brother, Richard, Earl of Cornwall. The marriage was celebrated with much splendour; the king directing that the whole way from London Bridge to Westminster should be hung with tapestry and other ornaments.

But while Henry thus lavished gifts on his queen's relations, he duly, according to orthodox practice, mulcted the unfortunate Jews. During the same year writs were forwarded to the sheriffs of each county, directing them to return before Henry at Worcester, upon Quinquagesima Sunday, the names of six of the richest Jews from each large town and two from every small one, "to treat with him for their *mutual benefit*." This assembly, which has been called the "Jews' Parliament," soon discovered that the monarch's care for his own benefit absorbed all consideration for theirs. He informed them that they must raise him no less a sum than 20,000 marks, not less than £200,000 at the present value of money. When the Jews expressed their astonishment at the enormous amount demanded, all liberty of remonstrance or discussion was denied them; they were told to return to their homes again, and have one-half of the required sum ready by Midsummer, and the remaining half by Michaelmas. The account of this iniquitous act of oppression is taken from Dr. Tovey's "Judaica Anglia," and is but one of many instances of the cruel rapacity exercised on this unfortunate race. As, during the same year, Raymond, the queen's father, received a gratification of 4,000 marks, there is little doubt that a portion of the spoil obtained so dishonestly enabled the king to gratify the avarice of his father-in-law.

In his oppression of the Jews Henry resembled his father. On two occasions during his reign the absurd charge of crucifying a Christian child was brought against them; and so strongly were the superstitious feelings of the nation excited, that many of the richest Israelites fled, when, as a matter of course, the king seized all their property. In Lincoln eighty of the wealthiest Jews were hanged, and sixty-three sent prisoners to the Tower, to undergo a similar fate. Several appear to have been marked out for particular spoliation. Aaron of York, whom Scott doubtless had in view when he wrote "Ivanhoe," declared to Matthew Paris that no less than 30,000 marks had been extorted from him in seven years, besides a gift of 200 to the queen.

Towards London the hostility of Henry was strongly marked, and on various "right royal" pretexts he grievously mulcted the citizens; while his cruel execution of Constantine Fitz-Arnulph, whose only crime seems to have been opposition to the overbearing conduct of the Abbot of Westminster, encouraged an equal hostility in the hearts of the citizens; and from henceforward they determinedly took their place in the ranks of the king's enemies. The whole account may be seen in Stowe; and when we read that this unfortunate citizen offered 15,000 marks for his life, we have strong proof of Henry's hatred to London, which could urge so mercenary and so needy a monarch to reject such a ransom. Ere long, the citizens obtained a marked triumph. The king, reduced almost to beggary by the swarms of foreign adventurers who grew rich upon his bounty, was compelled to pledge the crown jewels. In vain did he offer them to wealthy noble, or rich Italian merchant; none could buy: it was the citizens of London who paid down the stipulated sum; and Henry saw the crown jewels pass into the hands of these, the most detested of his subjects.

Matthew Paris has left us a singular account of a ceremony which took place in 1247, when Henry received from the patriarch of Jerusalem a relic which he accepted with unquestioned faith. The gift consisted of a portion of the blood of Christ. On its arrival, the king commanded all the clergy of London and Westminster to attend with crosses, banners, and tapers at St. Paul's, where he himself repaired, and taking from the treasury the crystal vase which contained the supposed treasure, "with all honour, reverence, and fear, bore it upon its stand, walking on foot, in mean attire—that is to say, in a cloak made of coarse cloth, without a hood—to the church of Westminster.

"The pious monarch," continues the chronicler, "did not cease to carry it in both hands, through all the rugged and miry way, keeping his eyes constantly fixed upon it, or elevating it devoutly towards heaven."

Henry, however, had a canopy held over him, supported by four lances; and an attendant on either hand, guiding him by the arms lest he should stumble. When he arrived at Westminster, he was met by the whole convent at the church door; but not even then did the king relinquish his precious burden: he went round the church, the chapels, and the adjoining court, and at length presented the vase and its contents "to God and the church of St. Peter." Mass was then sung; and the Bishop of Norwich, ascending the pulpit, delivered a sermon to the people, extolling the value of the relic, lauding the great devotion of the king, and anathematising all those who hinted doubts of its genuineness. This memorable day was closed by the king's feasting sumptuously and conferring knighthood on his half-brother, William de Valence; and the well-pleased monk of St. Albans, who was present, records the gratifying circumstance that Henry, seeing him, called him, and prayed him "expressly and fully to record all these things in a well-written book."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE REIGN OF HENRY III. (*concluded*).

The King's Misfortunes Abroad and Exactions at Home—Ambition and Rapacity of the Church of Rome—The Council of Lyons—The Kingdom of Sicily—Henry Accepts the Crown for his Son—Consequent Extortions—Richard becomes King of the Romans—Disputes between the King and the Barons—Simon de Montfort—He becomes Leader of the National Party—The Mad Parliament and the Provisions of Oxford—Banishment of Aliens—Government of the Barons—Peace with France—Henry is Absolved from the Provisions of Oxford—The Barons Oppose Him—Outbreak of Hostilities—The Award of Amiens—The Battle of Lewes—The Mise of Lewes—Supremacy of Leicester—The Exiles assemble at Damme—The Parliament of 1265—Escape of Prince Edward—Battle of Evesham and Death of De Montfort—Continuance of the Rebellion—The Dictum de Kenilworth—Parliament of Marlborough—Prince Edward goes on Crusade—Deaths of Henry d'Almaine, Richard of Cornwall, and the King—Character of Henry.

HENRY'S bounty and profuse liberality to his foreign relations, his friends and favourites, might have appeared less intolerable to his subjects had anything been done for the honour of the nation. But the crown was so utterly subservient to the See of Rome, that it fell into contempt and well-deserved hatred. The regal vassal appeared to have no will but that of the Pontiff, who (as was to be expected) was not slow to abuse Henry's weakness.

It is true that the king, in 1242, declared war against Louis IX. of France, and undertook an expedition into Gascony at the earnest solicitation of the Count de la Marche, who promised to support him with all his force. He was unsuccessful in his attempts against that great monarch, was compelled to avoid destruction at Taillebourg by concluding an armistice, was deserted by his allies, lost what remained to him of Poitou, and was obliged to return, with loss of honour, into England. The Gascon nobility were attached to the English government because the distance of their sovereign allowed them to remain in a state of almost total independence; and they claimed, some time after, Henry's protection against an invasion which the King of Castile made upon their territory. Henry returned into Gascony, and was more successful in this expedition, but he thereby involved himself and his nobility in enormous debt, which both increased their discontents and exposed him to greater danger from their enterprises.

Want of economy and an ill-judged liberality were Henry's great defects; and his debts, even before this expedition, had become so troublesome, that he sold all his plate and jewels in order to discharge them. When this expedient was first proposed to him, he asked where he should find purchasers. It was replied, "The citizens of London." "On my word," said he, "if the treasury of Augustus were brought to sale, the citizens are able to be the purchasers: these clowns, who assume to themselves the name of barons, abound in everything, while we are reduced to necessaries." And he was thenceforth observed to be more forward and greedy in his exactions upon the citizens.

But the grievances which the English during this reign had reason to complain of in the civil government, seemed to have been still less burthensome than those which they suffered from usurpations and exactions of the court of Rome. On the death of Langton in 1228, the monks of Christ Church elected Walter de Hemesham, one of their own body, for his successor. But as Henry refused to confirm the election, the Pope, at his desire, annulled it, and immediately appointed Richard, Chancellor of Lincoln, for archbishop, without waiting for a new election. On the death of Richard in 1231, the monks elected Ralph de Neville, Bishop of Chichester; and though Henry was much pleased with the election, the Pope, who thought that prelate too much attached to the crown, assumed the power of annulling his election. He rejected two clergymen more, whom the monks had successively chosen; and he at last told them that if they would elect Edmund, treasurer of the church at Salisbury, he would confirm their choice, and his nomination was complied with. The Pope had the prudence to appoint both times very worthy primates; but men could not forbear observing his intention of thus drawing gradually to himself the right of bestowing that important dignity.

The avarice, however, more than the ambition of the See of Rome seems to have been in this age the ground of general complaint. The papal ministers, finding a vast stock of power amassed by their predecessors, were desirous of turning it to immediate profit, which they enjoyed at home, rather than of enlarging their authority in distant countries, where they never intended to reside. Everything was become venal in the Romish tribunals; simony was openly practised; no favours, and even no justice, could be obtained without a bribe; the highest bidder was sure to have the preference, without regard either to the merits of the person or of the cause; and besides the usual perversions of right in the decision of controversies, the Pope openly assumed an absolute and uncontrolled authority of setting aside, by the plenitude of his apostolic power, all particular rule, and all privileges of patrons, churches, and convents. On pretence of remedying these abuses, Pope Honorius, in 1226, complaining of the poverty of his See as the source of all grievances, demanded from every cathedral two of the best prebends, and from every convent two monk's portions, to be set apart as a perpetual and settled revenue of the papal crown. But all men being sensible that the revenue would continue for ever, and the abuses immediately return, his demand was unanimously rejected. About three years after, the Pope demanded and obtained the tenth of all ecclesiastical revenues, which he levied in a very oppressive manner, requiring payment before the clergy had drawn their rent or tithes, and sending about usurers, who advanced them the money at exorbitant interest. In the year 1240, Otho, the legate, having in vain attempted the clergy in a body, obtained separately, by intrigues and menaces, large sums from the convents and prelates; and on his departure is said to have carried more money out of the kingdom than he left in it.

This experiment was renewed four years afterwards by Martin, the legate, who brought from Rome full powers of suspending and excommunicating all priests who refused compliance with his demands; and the king, who relied on him for support to his tottering authority, never failed to uphold these exactions.

Meanwhile, all the chief benefices in the kingdom were conferred on Italians. Great numbers of that nation were sent over at one time to be provided for; non-residence and pluralities were carried to an enormous extent. Mansel, the king's chaplain, is reputed to have held at once 700 ecclesiastical livings; and the abuses became so glaring as to be palpable to the slow-wits of superstition itself. The people, entering into association, rose against the Italian clergy, pillaged their barns, wasted their lands, and insulted the persons of such of them as they found in the kingdom; and when the justices made inquiry into the authors of this disorder, the guilt was found to involve so many, and those of such high rank, that it passed unpunished. At last, when Innocent IV., in 1245, called a general council at Lyons, in order to excommunicate the Emperor Frederick, the king and nobility sent agents to complain before the council of the rapacity of the Romish Church. They represented, among many other grievances, that the benefices of the Italian clergy in England had been estimated, and were found to amount to 60,000 marks a year—a sum which exceeded the annual revenue of the crown itself. They obtained only an evasive answer from the Pope; but as mention had been made before the council of the feudal subjection of England to the See of Rome, the English agents, at whose head was Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, exclaimed against the pretension, and insisted that King John had no right, without the consent of his barons, to subject the kingdom to so ignominious a servitude. The Popes, indeed, afraid of carrying matters too far against England, seem thenceforth to have little insisted on that pretension.

SILVER PENNY OF HENRY III.

This check received at the council of Lyons did not, however, stop the court of Rome in its rapacity. Innocent exacted the revenues of all vacant benefices; the twentieth of all ecclesiastical revenues without exception; the third of such as exceeded 100 marks a year, and the half of such as were possessed by non-residents. He claimed the goods of all intestate clergymen; he pretended a title to inherit all money gotten by usury; he levied benevolences upon the people; and when the king, contrary to his usual practice, prohibited these exactions, the Pope threatened to pronounce against him the same censures which he had emitted against the Emperor Frederick.

But the most oppressive expedient employed by the Pope was the embarking of Henry in a project for the acquisition of Sicily, as it was called—an enterprise which threw much dishonour on the king, and involved him during some years in great trouble and expense. The Romish Church, taking advantage of favourable incidents, had reduced the kingdom of Sicily to the same state of feudal vassalage which she pretended to extend over England, and which, by reason of the distance, as well as high spirit, of the latter kingdom she was not able to maintain. After the death of the Emperor Frederick II. the succession of Sicily devolved on Conrad I., son of that monarch, whose half-brother, Manfred, under pretence of governing the kingdom during the minority of the young prince, had formed the ambitious scheme of obtaining the crown himself.

Pope Innocent, who had carried on violent war against the emperor, and desired nothing more ardently than to deprive him of his Italian dominions, still continued hostilities against his successor. He pretended to dispose of the crown of Italy, not only as its temporal lord, but by right of his office as Christ's vicar; and he tendered it to the Earl of Cornwall, whose immense wealth, he flattered himself, would enable him to carry on the war successfully against Manfred.

Richard, however, had the good sense to decline the proposal; but when on the death of Conrad in 1254 the offer was made by the Pope to Henry, he accepted the crown for his second son Edmund, and gave the Pontiff unlimited credit to expend whatever money he thought necessary for the subjugation of that kingdom. The consequence was, that he found himself speedily involved in an immense debt, amounting to 135,541 marks.

GOLD PENNY OF HENRY III.

In this dilemma, unwilling to retreat, the king summoned a Parliament to grant him supplies, but omitted sending writs to the refractory barons; yet even those who attended were so sensible of the audacious cheat, that they refused to take his demands into consideration. In this extremity the clergy were his only resource.

The Pope, to aid him, published a crusade against Manfred. He leased a tenth of all the ecclesiastical benefices in England, and granted Henry the goods of all churchmen who died intestate, and the revenues of ancient benefices. But these taxations, iniquitous as they undoubtedly were, were deemed less objectionable than another imposition, suggested by the Bishop of Hereford, which might have opened the door to endless abuses.

This prelate, who resided at the court of Rome by deputation from the English Church, drew bills of different values, but amounting on the whole to 150,540 marks, on all the bishops and abbots of the kingdom; and granted these bills to Italian merchants, who, it was pretended, had advanced money for the service of the war against Manfred. As there was no likelihood of the English prelates submitting without compulsion to such an extraordinary demand, Rustand, the legate, was charged with the commission of employing authority for that purpose; and he summoned an assembly of the bishops and abbots, whom he acquainted with the pleasure of the Pope and of the king. Great were the surprise and indignation of the assembly: the Bishop of Worcester exclaimed that he would lose his life rather than comply; the Bishop of London said that the Pope and king were more powerful than he, but if his mitre were taken off his head, he would clap on a helmet in its place. The legate was no less violent on the other hand; and he told the assembly, in plain terms, that all ecclesiastical benefices were the property of the Pope, and he might dispose of them, either in whole or in part, as he saw proper. In the end, the bishops and abbots, being threatened with excommunication, which made all their revenues fall into the

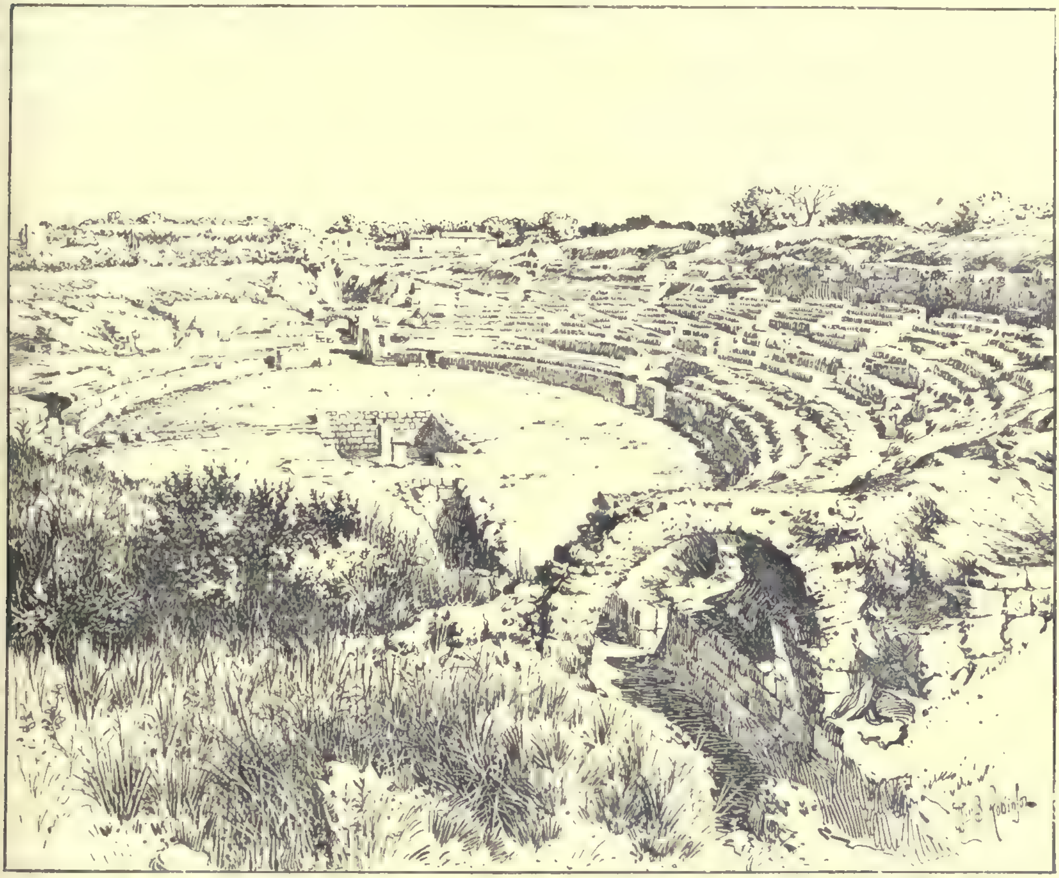


Photo: Alinari, Florence.

VIEW IN SICILY: THE AMPHITHEATRE, SYRACUSE.

king's hands, were obliged to submit to the exaction; and the only mitigation which the legate allowed them was, that the tenths already granted should be accepted as partial payment of the bills. But the money was still insufficient for the Pope's purpose; the conquest of Sicily was as remote as ever. The demands which came from Rome were endless. Pope Alexander IV. became so urgent a creditor, that he sent a legate over to England threatening the kingdom with an interdict, and the king with excommunication, if the arrears which he pretended to be due to him were not instantly remitted; and at last Henry, sensible of the cheat, began to think of breaking off the agreement, and of resigning the crown of Sicily, which it was not intended by Alexander that Henry or his family should ever possess.

The Earl of Cornwall had now reason to pride himself on his foresight in refusing the fraudulent bargain with Rome, and in preferring the solid honours of an opulent and powerful prince of the blood of England to the empty and precarious glory of a foreign dignity. But he had not always firmness sufficient to adhere to this resolution; his vanity and ambition prevailed at last over his prudence and his avarice; and he was engaged in an enterprise no less extensive and vexatious than that of his brother, and not attended with much greater probability of success. The immense opulence of Richard having made the German princes cast their eye on him as a candidate for the empire, he was tempted to expend vast sums of money on his election; and in 1257 he was chosen King of the Romans, which seemed to render his succession to the Imperial throne inevitable. He went to Germany, and carried out of the kingdom no less a sum than 700,000 marks, if we may credit some ancient authors, but the amount is probably much exaggerated. His money, while it lasted, procured him friends and partisans; but it was soon drained from him by the avidity of the German princes. Then having no personal or family connections in that country, and no solid foundation of power, he soon found that he had lavished away the hoard of a lifetime in order to procure a splendid title; and that his absence from England, joined to the weakness of his brother's government, had given occasion to the barons once more to revolt, and involved his country and family in great calamities.

The successful revolt of the nobles in the reign of King John, and their imposing a limit to the royal power, had sufficiently convinced them of their weight and importance in the state. This triumph, followed as it was by a long minority, had weakened as well as impoverished the crown.

In Henry's situation, either great abilities and vigour were necessary to overawe the nobility, or great prudence of conduct to avoid giving them just grounds of complaint. Unfortunately, he possessed none of these qualities, having neither prudence to choose right measures, nor that constancy of purpose which sometimes ensures success even to wrong. He was entirely devoted to his unworthy favourites, who were all foreigners; and upon these he lavished without discretion his diminished resources.

Henry, finding that the barons indulged in the most unbridled tyranny towards their own vassals, without observing the laws they had imposed upon the crown, unhesitatingly followed the evil example set before him. In his administration the Great Charter was continually violated—a course of conduct which not only lessened his authority in the kingdom, but multiplied the sources of discontent against him, exposed him to affront and danger, and provoked resistance to his remaining prerogatives.

Matthew Paris relates that, in 1244, when he desired a supply from parliament, the barons, complaining of the frequent violations of the Charter, demanded that in return for the money, he should resign the right of nominating the chancellor and great justiciary of the kingdom to them; and, if we may credit the same historian, they had formed further plans which, if successfully carrie out, would have reduced the crown to a state o pupilage and dependence. The king, however, would consent to nothing but a renewal of the Great Charter, and a general permission to excommunicate all who might hereafter violate it. All he could obtain in return for his concession was a scutage of twenty shillings on each knight's fee, for the marriage of his eldest daughter with the King of Scotland—an impost which was expressly provided for by their feudal tenures.

Four years afterwards, in full parliament, he was reproached for having broken his word and again violated his promises, and was asked if he did not blush to ask aid from his people—whom he openly professed to despise and hate, and to whom he on all occasions preferred strangers and aliens—from a people who groaned under the exactions which he either exercised over them or permitted others to inflict? He was told that, in addition to insulting his nobility, by forcing them to contract unequal marriages with foreigners, no class of his subjects was too obscure to escape the tyranny of himself and his ministers; that even the food he consumed in his household, the clothes which himself and his servants wore, and the wine they drank, were all taken by violence from their lawful owners, and no kind of compensation ever offered; that foreign merchants, to the shame of the kingdom, shunned the English harbours as if they were infested by pirates; and that all commerce was being gradually destroyed by these acts of unprincipled violence.

Unhappily, this was no exaggerated picture. In his reckless proceedings Henry even added insult to injury, by forcing the traders whom he despoiled of their goods to carry them at their own expense to whatever place he chose to appoint. Even the poor fishermen could not escape his rapacity and that of his foreign favourites, till, finding they could not dispose of the fruit of their labours at home, they carried them to foreign ports.

The king, says Matthew Paris, gave the parliament only good words and fair promises in answer to these remonstrances, accompanied with the most humble submissions—which, however, they had too often found deceitful to be gulled by any longer; the consequence was, that they unanimously refused the supply he asked, to the great disappointment of his rapacious favourites.

In 1253 he again found himself obliged to apply to parliament, which he did under pretence of having made a vow to undertake a crusade.

The parliament hesitated to comply, and the ecclesiastical order sent a deputation to Henry, consisting of four prelates—the primate, and the Bishops of Winchester, Salisbury, and Carlisle—to remonstrate with him on his frequent violation of their privileges, the oppressions with which he had loaded them as well as the rest of his subjects, and the uncanonical and forced elections made to the vacant dignities in the Church. "It is true," replied the king, "I have been somewhat faulty in this particular: I obtruded you, my lord of Canterbury, on your see; I was obliged to employ both entreaties and menaces, my lord of Winchester, to have you elected; my proceedings, I confess, were very irregular, my lords of Salisbury and Carlisle, when I raised you from the lowest stations to your present dignities. I am determined henceforth to correct these abuses; and it will also become you, in order to make a thorough reformation, to resign your present benefices, and try to enter again in a more regular and canonical manner." The bishops, surprised at these unexpected sarcasms, replied that the question was not at present how to correct past errors, but to avoid them for the future. The king promised redress, both of ecclesiastical and civil grievances; and the parliament in return agreed to grant him supply—a tenth of the ecclesiastical benefices, and a scutage of three marks on each knight's fee; but as they had experienced his frequent breach of promise, they required that he should ratify the Great Charter in a manner still more authentic and more solemn than any which he had hitherto employed. All the prelates and abbots were assembled; they held lighted tapers in their hands; the Great Charter was read before them; they denounced the sentence of excommunication against every one who should thenceforth violate the fundamental law; they threw their tapers on the ground, and exclaimed, "May the soul of every one who incurs this sentence so stink and corrupt in hell!" The king bore a part in this ceremony, and subjoined, "So help me God, I will keep all these articles inviolate, as I am a man, as I am a Christian, as I am a knight, and as I am a king crowned and anointed." Yet was this tremendous ceremony no sooner finished, than his favourites, abusing his weakness, made him return to the same arbitrary and irregular administration, and the expectations and hopes of the nation were again eluded and disappointed.

The universal discontent which ensued afforded a pretext to Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, to attempt, by means of a revolution, to wrest the sceptre from the feeble and irresolute hands which held it. This powerful noble was the younger son of that Simon de Montfort who displayed so much skill and courage in the crusade against the unfortunate Albigenses, but who tarnished his fame by the most execrable cruelty; for the history of religious persecution does not show a darker page than that in which the sufferings of the Albigenses are recorded.

A large inheritance in Britain had fallen to the victorious crusader, whose eldest son, unable to perform fealty to the Kings of France and England, had transferred it to his younger brother Simon, who came over and did homage for his lands and the title of Earl of Leicester

In 1238 he married Eleanor, the king's sister, the widow of William, Earl of Pembroke; but the union of the princess with a subject and a foreigner, though contracted with Henry's consent, was loudly complained of, not only by the

Earl of Cornwall, but also by most of the English barons. The bridegroom, however, was protected against their violence by his brother-in-law, who little imagined the return he would meet with.

No sooner had Leicester succeeded in establishing himself in his new possessions and dignities, than he acquired, by insinuation and address, great popularity and influence with the nation, gaining the affections of all orders of men—a circumstance which lost him the friendship of the feeble monarch, who first banished him from court, then weakly recalled him, and finally, to rid himself of his presence, entrusted him with the government of Gascony, where he did good service, and acquired great honour.

Instead of being rewarded, as he had every reason to expect, he was once more exiled. Henry called him a traitor to his face; on which the haughty noble gave him the lie, and told him that, if he were not his sovereign, he would soon make him repent the insult.

This second quarrel was, however, accommodated, either through the good nature or fear of Henry, and the offender admitted once more to some share of favour and authority. With all his defects, Leicester appears to have been of too noble and independent a nature to observe a compliance with his brother-in-law's capricious humours, or to act in subserviency to his minions. Perhaps he found it more to his advantage to cultivate the good opinion of the people, and to inflame the general discontent against the wretched administration of the kingdom. He filled every place with his complaints against the infringements of the Great Charter, the acts of violence committed on the people, the iniquitous

HENRY'S QUARREL WITH DE MONTFORT. (*See p.* 296.)

THE BARONS SUBMITTING THEIR DEMANDS TO HENRY. (*See p.* 298.)

combination between the Pope and the king in their mutual acts of tyranny and extortion, and the neglect shown to his native subjects and barons by Henry.

In this last complaint, although a foreigner himself, he was more zealous than any other noble in the realm, in representing the indignity of submitting to be governed by strangers. He succeeded in obtaining the favour of the clergy, whilst, at the same time, he secured the affections of the people. He carefully cultivated the friendship of the barons by pretending an animosity against the favourites, which animosity served as the basis of union between himself and that powerful order.

A violent quarrel which broke out between Leicester and William de Valence, Henry's half-brother and chief favourite, brought matters to a head, and determined the former to give full scope to his long-cherished schemes of ambition, which the laws and the royal authority had hitherto restrained, though with some difficulty.

He secretly called an assembly of the most powerful nobles, particularly Humphrey of Hereford, High Constable; Roger of Norfolk, Earl Marshal; and the Earls of Warwick and Gloucester—men who, by their exalted rank and immense possessions, stood foremost in the rank of English nobility.

To this assembly he exposed the necessity of reforming the state, and entrusting the execution of the laws to other hands than those which had proved themselves, by bitter experience, so totally unfitted for the charge confided to them. In his harangue he did not forget to inveigh against the oppression exercised against the lower orders, or to exaggerate the violations of the privileges of the barons, and the depredations committed on the clergy; and, in order to aggravate the enormity of his brother-in-law's conduct, he appealed to the Great Charter, which Henry had so often sworn to maintain and so repeatedly violated.

With much show of justice, he urged that this violation of privileges which their ancestors had wrung from the crown by an enormous sacrifice of blood and treasure, ought not to be endured, unless they were prepared to set the seal upon their own degeneracy by permitting such advantages to be torn from them by a weak prince and his insolent foreign favourites. To all suggestions of a remonstrance, the speaker replied by observing that the king's word had been too frequently broken, although confirmed by oaths, ever again to be relied upon, and that nothing short of his being placed in a position of utter inability to violate the national privileges could henceforth ensure the regular observance of them.

These complaints, which were founded in truth, accorded so entirely with the sentiments of the assembly, that they produced the desired effect, and the barons pledged themselves to a resolution of reducing the public grievances, by taking into their own hands the administration of the kingdom.

Henry having summoned a parliament, in expectation of receiving supplies for his Sicilian project, the barons appeared in the hall, clad in complete armour, and with their swords by their side. The king, on his entry, struck with the unusual appearance, asked them what was their purpose, and whether they intended to make him their prisoner. Roger Bigod replied, in the name of the rest, that he was not their prisoner, but their sovereign; that they even intended to grant him large supplies, in order to fix his son on the throne of Sicily; that they only expected some return for this expense and service; and that, as he had frequently made submissions to the parliament, had acknowledged his past errors, and still allowed himself to be carried into the same path, which gave them such just reason of complaint, he must now yield to more strict regulations, and confer authority on those who were able and willing to redress the national grievances. Henry, partly allured by the hopes of supply, partly intimidated by the union and martial aspect of the barons, agreed to their demand; and promised to summon another parliament at Oxford, in order to digest the new plan of government, and to elect the persons who were to be entrusted with the chief authority.

This parliament—which the royalists, and even the nation, from experience of the confusion that attended its measures, afterwards denominated the *Mad Parliament*—met on the day appointed; and as all the barons brought along with them their military vassals, and appeared with an armed force, the king, who had taken no precautions against them, was in reality a prisoner in their hands, and was obliged to submit to all the terms which they were pleased to impose upon him. Twelve barons were selected from among the king's ministers, twelve more were chosen by parliament: to these twenty-four, unlimited authority was granted to reform the state; and the king himself took an oath that he would maintain whatever ordinances they should think proper to enact for that purpose. The barons chose a council of four, and these in turn nominated a council of state, or executive ministry of fifteen. Leicester was at the head of this supreme council, to which the legislative power was thus in reality transferred; and all their measures were taken by his secret influence and direction. The first step bore a specious appearance, and seemed well calculated for the end which they professed to be the object of all these innovations: they ordered that four knights should be chosen by each county; that these should make inquiry into the grievances of which their neighbourhood had reason to complain, and should attend the ensuing parliament, in order to give information of the state of their particular counties—a nearer approach to our present constitution than had been made by the barons in the reign of King John, when the knights were appointed only to meet in their several counties, and there to draw up a detail of their grievances. Meanwhile the twenty-four barons proceeded to enact some regulations as a redress of such grievances as were supposed to be sufficiently notorious: they ordered that three sessions of parliament should be regularly held every year, in the months of February, June, and October; that a new sheriff should be annually elected by the votes of the freeholders in each county; that the sheriffs should have no power of fining the barons who did not attend their courts or the circuits of the justiciaries; that no heirs should be committed to the wardship of foreigners, and no castles entrusted to their custody; and that no new warrens or forests should be created, nor the revenues of any counties or hundreds be let to farm. Such were the regulations which the twenty-four barons established at Oxford for the redress of public grievances.

But the Earl of Leicester and his associates, having advanced so far to satisfy the nation, instead of continuing in this popular course, or granting the king that supply which they had promised him, immediately provided for the extension and continuance of their own authority. They roused anew the popular clamour which had long prevailed against foreigners; and they fell with the utmost violence on the king's half-brothers, who were supposed to be the authors of all national grievances, and whom Henry had no longer any power to protect. The four brothers, sensible of their danger, took to flight, with the intention of making their escape out of the kingdom; they were eagerly pursued by the barons. Aylmer, one of the brothers, who had been elected to the see of Winchester, took shelter in his episcopal palace, and carried the others along with him; they were surrounded in that place, and threatened to be dragged out by force, and to be punished for their crimes and misdemeanours; and the king, pleading the sacredness of an ecclesiastical sanctuary, was glad to extricate them from this danger by banishing them the kingdom.

In this act of violence, as well as in the former usurpations of the barons, the queen and her uncles are supposed to have secretly concurred, being jealous of the credit acquired by the brothers, which had entirely eclipsed their own.

The subsequent proceedings of the confederate barons ought to have opened the eyes of the nation to their real design, which was neither more nor less than reducing both the king and the people under the arbitrary power of a very limited aristocracy, which, had it been carried out, must have terminated at last in anarchy or tyranny.

They artfully pretended that they had not yet digested all the regulations necessary for the reformation of the state, and the redress of grievances; that they must still retain their power till this great purpose was effected: or, in other words, that they intended to remain perpetual governors till it pleased them to abdicate their authority; and, in order to cement their power, they formed an association amongst themselves, and swore that they would stand by each other with their lives and fortunes.

The justiciary, the chancellor, and treasurer of the kingdom were removed from their offices, and creatures of the barons thrust into their places; even the offices of the king's household were disposed of at their pleasure, and the government of all castles was put into hands in which they could confide; and the whole power of the state being thus practically transferred to them, they put the crowning act to their usurpations by imposing an oath—which all subjects were obliged to swear under penalty of being proclaimed public enemies—that they would obey and execute all regulations, both known and unknown, of the twenty-four barons.

Never had men a more glorious opportunity of covering themselves with honour, and securing the gratitude of their country, than the confederates now possessed; but, instead of devoting themselves to establishing the liberties of their country, reforming abuses, and correcting the laws, they selfishly preferred their personal aggrandisement.

Edward, the king's eldest son, then a youth of eighteen, who, even at that early age, gave indications of the noble, manly spirit which distinguished him in after life, was, after some opposition, forced to take the oath, which virtually deposed his father and his family from sovereign authority. The last person in the kingdom who held out was Earl de Warrenne, but even he was eventually compelled to submit.

Not content with this usurpation of the royal power, the barons introduced an innovation in the constitution which was utterly at variance with its letter and spirit. They ordained that parliament should choose a committee of twelve persons, who should, in the intervals between the sessions, possess all the authority of the whole parliament, and attend, on a summons to that effect, the person of the king wherever he might reside. So powerful were the confederates, that even this regulation was submitted to, and thus the entire government was overthrown, or fixed upon a new foundation; the monarchy subsisted without it being possible for the king to strike a single blow in defence of the constitution against the newly-elected oligarchy.

The lesson to Henry must have been a bitter one, for he was the last person in the kingdom who had a right to complain. He could invoke no law which he had not been the first to violate. The degradation and restraint he endured were the just punishment of his perfidy and countless perjuries.

The report that the King of the Romans intended visiting England alarmed the confederated nobles, who dreaded lest his extensive influence should be employed to restore his family, and overturn their new system of government. Under this impression they sent the Bishop of Worcester to meet him at St. Omer, to demand, in their name, the reason of his journey; how long he intended to remain in the kingdom; and to insist that, before he set foot in it, he should swear to observe the regulations established at Oxford.

On Richard's refusal to take this oath, they prepared to resist him as a public enemy. They fitted out a fleet, assembled an army, and, exciting the inveterate prejudices of the people against foreigners, from whom they had suffered so many oppressions, spread the report that Richard, attended by a number of strangers, meant to restore by force the authority of his exiled brothers, and to violate all the securities provided for public liberty. The King of the Romans was at last obliged to submit to the terms required of him.

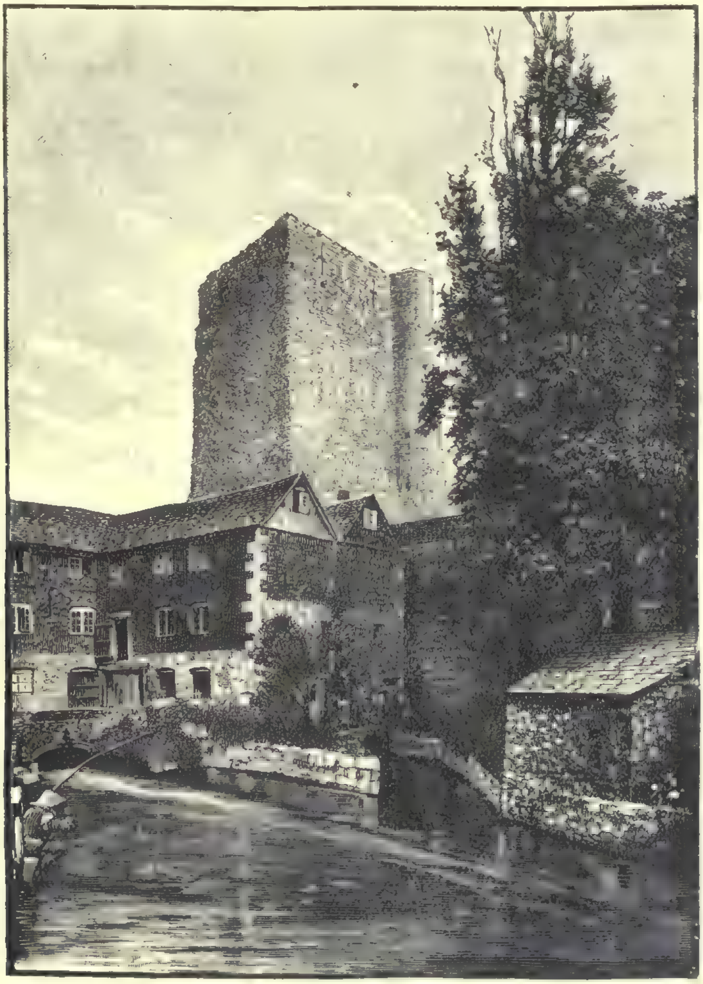
But the barons, in proportion to their continuance in power, began gradually to lose that popularity which had assisted them in obtaining it; and men regretted that regulations, which were occasionally established for the reformation of the state, were likely to become perpetual and subvert entirely the ancient constitution. They were apprehensive lest the power of the nobles, always oppressive, should now exert itself without control, by removing the counterpoise of the crown; and their fears were increased by some new edicts of the barons, which were plainly calculated to procure to themselves an immunity in all their violences. They appointed that the circuits of the itinerant justices, the sole check on their arbitrary conduct, should be held only once in seven years; and men easily saw that a remedy available only at such long intervals, against an oppressive power which was permanent, would prove totally insignificant and useless. The demand at length became urgent that the barons should finish their intended regulations. The knights of the shires, who seem now to have been pretty regularly assembled, and sometimes in a separate house, made remonstrances against the slowness of the barons' proceedings. They represented that though the king had performed all the conditions required of him, the barons had hitherto done nothing for the public good, and had only been careful to promote their own private advantage, and to make inroads on royal authority; and they even appealed to Prince Edward, and claimed his interposition for the interests of the nation and the reformation of the government. The prince replied that, though it was from constraint, and contrary to his private sentiments, he had sworn to maintain the provisions of Oxford, and was determined to observe his oath; but he sent a message to the barons, requiring them to bring their undertaking to a speedy conclusion, and fulfil their engagements to the public: otherwise, he threatened that, at the expense of his life, he would oblige them to do their duty, and would shed the last drop of his blood in promoting the interests and satisfying the just wishes of the nation.

The remonstrances of the knights of the shire, and the spirited conduct of the heir to the crown, obliged the barons at last to publish a new code of ordinances for the reformation of the State: but the expectations of the nation were bitterly disappointed when they found that this code consisted only of some trivial alterations in the municipal laws, and that the rulers intended to prolong their authority still further, under pretence that the task they had assumed was not yet accomplished.

France was at this time governed by Louis IX., a monarch of the most elevated character. He united to the most earnest piety all the courage and qualities of a hero, the justice and integrity of a patriot, and the mildness and humanity of a philosopher.

So far from taking advantage of the divisions amongst the English in attempting to expel them from the provinces which they still held in France, he entertained many doubts as to the justice of the sentence of attainder pronounced against Henry's father, the licentious and worthless John, whose forfeited possessions he had even expressed some intention of restoring.

Whenever this prince interposed in English affairs, it was always with an intention of composing the differences between the king and his nobility. He recommended to both parties every peaceable and reconciling measure, and he used all his authority with the Earl of Leicester, his native subject, to bend him to compliance with Henry. He made a treaty with England (May 20) at a time when the distractions of that kingdom were at the greatest height, and when the king's authority was totally annihilated, and the terms which he granted might, even in a more prosperous state of their affairs, be deemed reasonable and advantageous to the English. He yielded up Bordeaux, Bayonne, and Gascony; he ensured



OXFORD CASTLE. (*From Photograph by Taunt & Co.*)

the peaceable possession of the last-named province to Henry; he agreed to pay that prince a large sum of money; and he only required that the king should, in return, make a final cession of Normandy and the other provinces, which he could never maintain any hopes of recovering by force of arms. This cession was ratified by Henry, by his two sons and two daughters, and by the King of the Romans and his three sons.

But the situation of Henry soon after wore a still more favourable aspect. The twenty-four barons had now enjoyed the sovereign power nearly three years, and had visibly employed it, not for the reformation of the state, which was their first pretence, but for the aggrandisement of themselves and their favourites. The dissension amongst the barons themselves, whilst it added to the evil, made the remedy more obvious and easy. The desertion of the Earl of Gloucester to the crown seemed to promise Henry certain success in the event of his attempting to resume his authority, but he dared not take that step without first applying to Rome for absolution from the oaths and engagements he had contracted.

The king could not have made his application at a more fortunate period, for the Pope felt much dissatisfied with the conduct of the barons, who, in order to conciliate the nation, had expelled all the Italian ecclesiastics from the kingdom and confiscated their benefices. He proved himself willing, therefore, on Henry's application, to absolve him and all his subjects from the oath they had taken to observe the provisions of Oxford.

Prince Edward, whose liberal mind, though in such early youth, had taught him the great prejudice which his father had incurred by his levity, inconstancy, and frequent breach of promise, refused for a long time to take advantage of this absolution; and declared that the provisions of Oxford, how unreasonable soever in themselves, and how much soever abused by the barons, ought still to be adhered to by those who had sworn to observe them. He himself had been constrained by violence to take that oath; yet was he determined to keep it. By this scrupulous fidelity the prince acquired the confidence of all parties, and was afterwards enabled to recover fully the royal authority.

As soon as the king received the Pope's absolution from his oath, accompanied with menaces of excommunication against all opponents, trusting to the countenance of the Church, to the support promised him by many considerable barons, and to the returning favour of the people, he immediately took off the mask. After justifying his conduct by a proclamation, in which he set forth the private ambition and the breach of trust conspicuous in Leicester and his associates, he declared that he had resumed the government, and was determined thenceforth to exert the royal authority for the protection of his subjects. He removed Hugh le Despenser and Nicholas of Ely, the justiciary and chancellor appointed by the barons, and put Philip Basset and Walter de Merton in their place. He substituted new sheriffs in all the counties, men of character and honour; he placed new governors in most of the castles, he changed all the officers of his household; he summoned a parliament, in which the resumption of his authority was ratified, with only five dissenting voices; and the barons, after making one fruitless effort to take the king by surprise at Winchester, were obliged to acquiesce in these new regulations.

The king, in order to cut off every objection to his conduct, offered to refer all the differences between him and the Earl of Leicester to the King of France. The celebrated integrity of Louis gave a mighty influence to any decision which issued from his court; and Henry probably hoped that the gallantry on which all barons, as true knights, prided themselves, would make them ashamed not to submit to the award of that prince.

The Earl of Leicester was nowise discouraged by the bad success of his former enterprises; the death of Richard, Earl of Gloucester, who was his chief rival in power, seemed to open a fresh field to his ambition, and expose the throne to renewed violence. It was in vain that Henry declared his intention of strictly observing the Great Charter, and even of maintaining the regulations made at Oxford, with the exception of those which annihilated the royal authority; the barons would not peaceably resign the uncontrolled power they had so long enjoyed. Many of them entered into Leicester's views, and, among the rest, Gilbert, the young Earl of Gloucester, who brought with him a great accession of power from the wealth and authority he had inherited on the recent death of his father, de Montfort's rival. Even Henry, son of the King of the Romans—commonly called Henry d'Almaine—though a prince of the blood, joined the party of the barons against the interests of his family.

The princes of Wales, notwithstanding the great power of the monarchs both of the Saxon and Norman lines, had still preserved authority in their own country. Though they had frequently been forced to pay tribute to the crown of England, they were with difficulty retained in a state of vassalage, or even in peace; and almost through every reign since the Conquest had infested the English frontiers with such petty excursions and inroads as seldom secured a place in general history.

In 1237, Llewellyn, Prince of Wales, declining in years and stricken with infirmities, but still more harassed by the unnatural rebellion of his youngest son, Griffith, had recourse to the protection of Henry, subjecting his principality, which had so long maintained its independence, to vassalage under the crown of England.

His eldest son and heir, David, renewed the homage to England, and having taken his brother prisoner, delivered him into the hands of Henry, who kept him a prisoner in the Tower. Griffith lost his life in attempting to escape from his imprisonment, and the Prince of Wales, freed from the apprehension of so dangerous a rival, paid henceforth less regard to the English monarch, and soon renewed those incursions by which the Welsh, during so many ages, had infested the English borders.

Llewellyn, the son of Griffith, who succeeded to his uncle, although he had performed homage to England, was well pleased to inflame those civil discords on which he relied for security. For this purpose he entered into an alliance with Leicester, and, collecting all the forces of his principality, invaded England with an army of thirty thousand men.

He ravaged the lands of Roger de Mortimer, and of all the barons who adhered to the crown; he marched into Cheshire, and committed like depredations on Prince Edward's territories; every place where his disorderly troops appeared was laid waste with fire and sword; and though Mortimer, a gallant and expert soldier, made stout resistance, it was at length found necessary that the prince himself should head the army against this invader. Edward repulsed Prince Llewellyn, and obliged him to take shelter in the mountains of North Wales; but he was prevented from making further progress against the enemy by receiving intelligence of the disorders which soon after broke out in England.

The Welsh invasion was the appointed signal for the malcontent barons to rise in arms; and Leicester, coming over secretly from France, collected all the forces of his party, and commenced an open rebellion. He seized the person of the Bishop of Hereford—a prelate obnoxious to all the inferior clergy on account of his devoted attachment to the court of Rome. Simon, Bishop of Norwich, and John Mansel, because they had published the Pope's bull, absolving the king and kingdom from their oaths to observe the provisions of Oxford, were made prisoners, and exposed to the rage of the party. The king's demesnes were ravaged with unbounded fury; and as it was Leicester's interest to allure to his side, by the hopes of plunder, all the disorderly ruffians in England, he gave them a general license to pillage the barons of the opposite party, and even all neutral persons. But one of the principal resources of his faction was the populace of the cities, particularly of London; and as he had, by his pretensions to sanctity and his zeal against Rome, engaged the monks and lower ecclesiastics in his party, his dominion over the inferior ranks of men became uncontrollable. Thomas Fitz-Richard, Mayor of London, a furious and licentious man, gave the countenance of authority to these disorders in the capital; and having declared war against the substantial citizens, he loosened all the bands of government by which that turbulent city was commonly but ill restrained. On the approach of Easter, the zeal of superstition, the appetite for plunder, or what is often as prevalent with the populace as either of these motives, the pleasure of committing havoc and destruction, prompted them to attack the unhappy Jews, who were first pillaged without resistance, then massacred to the number of 500 persons. The Lombard bankers were next exposed to the rage of the people; and though, by taking sanctuary in the churches, they escaped with their lives, all their money and goods became a prey to the multitude. Not content with these excesses, the houses of the rich citizens, though English, were attacked by night; and way was made by sword and fire to the pillage of their goods, and often to the destruction of their persons.

The queen, who, though defended by the Tower, was terrified by the neighbourhood of such dangerous commotions, resolved to go by water to the castle of Windsor; but as she approached the bridge the populace assembled against her. There was a general cry of "Drown the witch;" and besides abusing her with the most opprobrious language, and pelting her with refuse and dirt, they had prepared large stones to sink the barge when the royal party should attempt to shoot the bridge. At this moment the mayor

FLIGHT OF QUEEN ELEANOR: SCENE AT LONDON BRIDGE.

interposed for the queen's protection, and conveyed her in safety to St. Paul's.

The violence and fury of Leicester's faction had risen to such a height in all parts of England, that the king, unable to resist their power, was obliged to set on foot a treaty of peace, and to make an accommodation with the barons on the most disadvantageous terms. He agreed to confirm anew the provisions of Oxford, even those which entirely annihilated the royal authority; and the barons were again reinstated in the sovereignty of the kingdom. They restored Hugh le Despenser to the office of chief justiciary; they appointed their own creatures sheriffs in every county of England; they took possession of all the royal castles and fortresses; they even named all the officers of the king's household; and they summoned a parliament to meet at Westminster, in order to settle more fully their plan of government. They here produced a new list of twenty-four barons, to whom they proposed that the administration should be entirely committed; and they insisted that the authority of this junta should continue, not only during the reign of the king, but also during that of Prince Edward.

This prince, the life and soul of the royal party, had, unhappily, before the king's accommodation with the barons, been taken prisoner by Leicester in a parley at Windsor; and that misfortune, more than any other incident, had determined Henry to submit to the ignominious conditions imposed upon him. But Edward, having recovered his liberty by the treaty, employed his activity in defending the prerogatives of his family; and he gained a great party even among those who had first adhered to the cause of the barons. His cousins, Henry d'Almaine, Roger Bigod Earl Marshal, Earl Warrenne, Humphrey Bohun, Earl of Hereford, John Basset, Ralph Basset, Hammond l'Estrange, Roger Mortimer, Henry de Piercy, Robert Bruce, Roger de Laybourne, with almost all the lords marchers (as they were called) on the borders of Wales and Scotland, the most warlike parts of the kingdom, declared in favour of the royal cause; and hostilities, which had scarcely been suppressed, were again renewed in every part of England. But the near balance of the parties, joined to the universal clamour of the people, obliged the king and barons to open anew the negotiations for peace; and both sides agreed to submit their differences to the arbitration of the King of France.

LEWES (SUSSEX). (*From a Photograph by W. S. Branch, Lewes.*)

This virtuous prince, the only man who, in like circumstances, could safely have been entrusted with such an authority by a neighbouring nation, had never ceased to interpose his good offices between the English factions; and had even, during the short interval of peace, invited over to Paris both the king and the Earl of Leicester, in order to adjust the differences between them, but found that the fears and animosities on both sides, as well as the ambition of Leicester, were so violent as to render all his endeavours ineffectual. But when this solemn appeal, ratified by the oaths and subscriptions of the leaders in both factions, was made to his judgment, he was not discouraged from pursuing his honourable purpose. He summoned the states of France at Amiens, and there, in the presence of that assembly, as well as in that of the King of England and Peter de Montfort, Leicester's son, he brought this great cause to a trial and examination. It appeared to him that the provisions of Oxford, even had they not been extorted by force, had they not been so exorbitant in their nature, and subversive of the ancient constitution, were expressly established as a temporary expedient. and could not, without breach of trust, be rendered perpetual by the barons. He therefore annulled those provisions; restored to the king the possession of his castles, and the power of nomination to the great offices; allowed him to retain what foreigners he pleased in the kingdom, and even to confer on them places of great trust and dignity; and, in a word, re-established the royal power on the same footing on which it stood before the meeting of the parliament at Oxford.

But while he suppressed dangerous innovations, and preserved unimpaired the prerogatives of the English crown, he was not negligent of the rights of the people. Besides ordering a general amnesty for all past offences, he declared that his award was not in any way intended to derogate from the liberties enjoyed by the nation in virtue of any concessions or charters from the crown.

The award of Louis may have been just in the abstract, and was certainly in accordance with the principles of the English constitution; but it involved measures which, under present circumstances, it was by no means expedient should be carried into effect. The barons might, indeed, have pressed too heavily upon the royal prerogative, and seized on every side, with little scruple, the securities they considered necessary; but it was certain that if those securities were suddenly and completely relinquished, the national charters would become as wholly inoperative as they were before the parliament of Oxford. The word of the king had ceased to have any weight whatever; and the barons determined to resist the award of Louis, and once more to take up arms. Again the country was desolated by civil war, which was renewed with more than its former fury.

The northern counties and those of the west remained attached to the cause of the king; while the strength of the barons lay in the midland and south-eastern counties, the Cinque Ports, and the neighbourhood of London. The citizens of the capital especially were conspicuous for the firmness with which they supported the barons, and the powerful assistance which they rendered to the insurgent cause. At the opening of the campaign various successes attended the movements of the royal troops. Elated by his good fortune, Henry marched to the south with the view of gaining the adhesion of the Cinque Ports. Meanwhile Leicester had remained in London; and thence, while watching the successful career of the king, had employed himself, with the calmness of a skilful general, in concentrating a body of forces. Having accomplished this object, he marched from the capital, determined to meet the king in the south, and compel him to a decisive battle. The army of Henry was greatly superior in numbers to the force marching against him, and therefore he resolved to await his enemies in the spot where he was already encamped —in a hollow or valley at Lewes, in Sussex. Leicester marched his troops to the downs about two miles from Lewes, where he encamped for the night.

The interval of repose was not suffered to pass unimproved. Leicester employed it in arousing in his favour all the superstitious feelings of his soldiery. In time of war or peace he had always been noted for his strict observance of religious forms; and he compared his own life and the cause in which he was engaged with the perjuries and treacheries of Henry, which he said had withdrawn from that king all favour of Heaven. He commanded that his army should wear a white cross, in token that they were engaged in a sacred war; and the Bishop of Chichester, one of his associates, gave a solemn absolution to the troops, promising honour to those who lived, and to those who fell the welcome of martyrs in heaven.

The evening hours were thus spent in exciting to the utmost the enthusiasm of the troops. On the morning of the 14th of May (1264), the earl prepared for the attack, and, leaving a reserve behind him, he descended upon the royal forces. On the king's side were the barons whose names have been already mentioned, together with John Baliol, Robert Bruce, and John Comyn from beyond the Scottish border. On the side of Leicester were the Earls Gloucester and Derby, Robert de Roos, John Fitz-John, John de Vescy, Nicholas Seagrave, Richard Grey, William Marmion, and many other powerful nobles.

As the two armies joined battle, the attack was commenced by Prince Edward, who on this day displayed evidence of that military talent and gallantry which were afterwards to become so conspicuous. The prince led a body of troops upon a force of Londoners, who had armed themselves in the cause they supported. Unskilled in the art of war, and probably much inferior in their appointments, the citizens gave way before the heavy cavalry of Edward, which cut them to pieces. The prince remembered the insults they had offered to his mother, and in his eagerness for vengeance he pursued the flying Londoners, perfectly regardless of what might happen to the rest of the royal army. Leicester meanwhile took advantage of this impetuosity and, collecting his forces into a compact and dense mass, led them against the main body of the king's troops, and completely defeated them. Henry himself was taken prisoner, with his brother the King of the Romans, Robert Bruce, and John Comyn.

When the prince returned from the pursuit on which he was engaged, he perceived the fatal error he had committed. The ground was covered with the bodies of his friends, and he learnt from a few breathless fugitives that his father, with many of his chief nobles, was in the hands of Leicester, and that they were all shut up in the priory of Lewes. Scarcely had the Prince received this news when he was attacked by a troop of cavalry, and was compelled to surrender. The Earl Warrenne, and with him the king's half-brothers, escaped from the field, and reached the Continent. It is stated that in this battle 5,000 Englishmen were slain by the hands of their countrymen.

On the following morning a treaty, called the "Mise of Lewes," was entered into between the defeated king and his barons. It was arranged that Prince Edward and Henry, the son of the King of the Romans, should remain in the hands of Leicester as hostages for their fathers, and that another attempt should be made finally to arrange matters by arbitration. The earl, however, who now found himself possessed of almost unlimited power, refused to release the king and his brother, and kept them, as well as their sons, in imprisonment. In this course of action he was supported by the people and by a large majority of the ecclesiastics; and when the Pope issued sentence of excommunication against Leicester and his party, many of the clergy defied the papal authority, and still held up to the admiration of their hearers the man who had been placed under the ban of Rome. They described him as the reformer of abuses, the protector of the oppressed, the avenger of the Church, and the father of the poor.

The popularity which Leicester at this time enjoyed was unexampled; and here we see again the not unfrequent spectacle of a man, strong in the affections of the people, becoming much more a king than he who wears the crown. The earl exercised his authority upon all those barons who still adhered to the royal cause, and compelled them to quit their strongholds, to give up their possessions, and submit to a trial by their peers. In the judgments passed upon these men we see the rapid advance which had lately taken place in civilisation. There were no sentences to death, or abominable torture, or chains; and in most cases the punishment inflicted consisted of a short exile to Ireland. The king's name was still employed in all acts of government, and his captivity was rendered as light as was consistent with the safe custody of his person. Every indulgence, together with all outward demonstrations of respect, was accorded to him, and a similar mildness was evinced towards the other royal prisoners.

Immediately before the battle of Lewes, the queen had escaped to the Continent, where she received offers of assistance from different foreign princes. To them the proceedings of the barons appeared only as a rebellion against the king; and they were interested in repressing such attempts against royal authority. With their assistance, the queen collected a large force of mercenaries, which was assembled at the port of Damme, in Flanders, in readiness to pass over into England. Leicester was not long in taking measures against this new danger. Secure in the good opinion of the people, he sent heralds throughout the country, summoning the men-at-arms from towns and castles, cities and boroughs, to meet him on Barham Downs. The call was generally responded to; and the earl having formed an encampment of his army on the Downs, he took the command of a fleet which he had collected from the neighbouring ports. For some time he cruised about the Channel, waiting for the fleet from Damme to set sail, and intending to intercept it and prevent it from reaching the English shores. But the queen's supporters, who entertained a salutary fear of a sea-fight with the English, did not venture to leave their shelter; and eventually her troops were disbanded, and the enterprise was relinquished.

But the downfall of the earl was at hand. Gifted, as he undoubtedly was, with a most powerful intellect, he was not superior to the demoralising influences of his high position. Possessed already of the substance of power to its full extent, he further aimed at the enjoyment of its forms. He asserted in too marked a manner his superiority over the barons associated with him—a proceeding to which those haughty chiefs were little disposed to submit. Prince Edward, who had been placed with his father, and with him enjoyed considerable liberty of person, carefully observed this growing dissatisfaction, and fomented it by every means at his command. It is worthy of remark here that the Parliament summoned by Leicester to consider the case of Prince Edward, was assembled early in 1265, and appears to have been the first Parliament at which representatives of the cities and boroughs were present, together with the knights of the shire.

The dissensions among the barons increased rapidly. The Earl of Gloucester declared himself the rival of De Montfort and, with the assistance of his brother, Thomas de Clare, who was an attendant of the prince, arranged a plan by which Edward might escape from confinement. The scheme succeeded; a swift horse was conveyed to the prince, on which he evaded pursuit, and reached Ludlow, where the Earl of Gloucester had fixed his headquarters. The earl was not remarkable for prudence or good sense; but the temper of the nobles had shown itself in too marked a manner to be mistaken, and he perceived that they would require pledges for the fulfilment of the charters before they would render any support to the royal cause. He therefore caused the prince to give such pledges, and to undertake that he would govern according to law and expel the foreigners from the realm.

The Earl of Derby had already entered into communication with the prince, and within a short time afterwards the Earl Warrenne sailed from the Continent, and landed in South Wales with 120 knights, and a troop of foot soldiers. Prince Edward also made arrangements with other nobles who were favourable to him, and effected a simultaneous rising in different parts of the country. Simon de Montfort, eldest son of the Earl of Leicester, was stationed in Sussex with a small force, while the earl himself, retaining possession of the king's person, remained at Hereford. Leicester was extremely anxious that his son should join him, and so concentrate their forces—a measure which Edward used every exertion to prevent. The prince took possession of the fords of the Severn, and destroyed the boats and bridges on that river. Some skirmishing took place between the rival armies, and the skill of the two leaders was displayed in various warlike manœuvres. At length Leicester succeeded in crossing the river, and proceeded to Worcester, where he awaited the arrival of his son. But Simon de Montfort showed little of his father's ability, and the active Prince Edward attacked him by night near Kenilworth, and captured all his horses and treasure. Many of his best men fell into the hands of the prince, and their leader was compelled to make his escape as best he could to the neighbouring castle, which was then in the possession of the De Montfort family.

The earl, unacquainted with this disaster, advanced his army to Evesham on the Avon. On arriving there he perceived his own standards on the hills, advancing from the direction of Kenilworth. His eyes were gladdened by the sight, and he advanced unsuspectingly to meet the destruction which was gathering around him. The standards were those of his son in the hands of his enemies; and when at length this was discovered it was too late to retreat. Meanwhile Prince Edward had directed a combined movement of troops in his flank and rear, so that the earl found himself completely surrounded. As he perceived the high degree of military skill shown in these arrangements, he is said to have complained that his enemies had learnt from him the art of war. He then exclaimed, "May the Lord have mercy on our souls, for our bodies are Prince Edward's!"

If such was the old general's opinion, it is not probable that he expressed it openly, and it is certain that he took measures for defence as energetically as though he were assured of victory. Having spent a short time in prayer, and taken the sacrament as was his custom before going into battle, he marshalled his men in compact order and placed himself at their head. In the first instance he endeavoured to force his way through

BATTLE OF EVESHAM: KING HENRY IN DANGER. (*See p.* 310.)

the royal troops with the intention of reaching Kenilworth. The attempt was frustrated, and he then formed his troops in a solid mass on the summit of a hill, which was speedily surrounded by his enemies. The king, who still remained with the earl, had been encased in armour and placed on horseback. During the confusion of the fight the old man was thrown from his horse, and only escaped being slain by calling out, "Hold your hand, I am Harry of Winchester." The prince who heard the voice, ran to his father's assistance, placed him on horseback, and carried him to a place of safety. Again and again the royalist troops advanced against the little band on the hill, and again and again were repulsed with heavy loss. Leicester's horse was killed under him—a serious accident in those days, when the motions of the knight were encumbered by a mass of armour—but the earl rose to his feet, and continued the struggle in that position. But the numbers of his foes were overpowering; as a few men with toil and difficulty were driven back, a hundred others stepped forward to supply their place, and it became evident that the contest was hopeless. Leicester then sent messengers to the royalists to demand whether they gave quarter; and the answer returned was that there was no quarter for traitors. His son Henry fell by his side, and each moment some one of the best and bravest of his friends was also struck down. At length the earl himself, after surviving most of the champions of his cause, and standing, as it were, alone, met the fate of his companions and fell sword in hand.

The acts of slaughter by which this victory was followed appear in very unfavourable contrast to the humanity which had been displayed by Leicester and his associates on a similar occasion. The usages of chivalry were altogether lost sight of; and such was the hatred of the royalists towards their opponents, inflamed still further by the gallant resistance they had met with, that no mercy was shown to them. No prisoners were taken, no quarter was given to rich or poor, no offer of ransom stayed the uplifted arm of the smiter; and barons and knights, yeomen and citizens, were mingled in an indiscriminate slaughter.

Leicester was beyond the vengeance of his foes, but nevertheless they gratified their brutal rage upon his inanimate corpse, which they cut up and disfigured in a horrible manner, and in this state presented it to a lady, the wife of one of the earl's most deadly enemies, to whom they appear to have considered that it would prove an acceptable gift. According to their custom, the people of England declared the dead hero to be a martyr, and from the reported holiness of his past life, they considered it certain that miracles would be wrought by him after his death; and such was generally believed to be the case, although, for fear of the king, they did not dare openly to express their belief. Whatever degree of justice there may have been in the popular view of Leicester's character, his name was reverenced among the people for many years, under the title of Sir Simon the Righteous.

The victory of Evesham restored the king at once to his authority. He proceeded to Warwick, where his brother, the King of the Romans, had advanced to meet him, accompanied by many of the noble prisoners of Lewes, who now for the first time regained their liberty. Within a month afterwards a parliament assembled at Winchester. The king was little more than a cipher among the company of his barons. He knew that by their arms his success had been won, and that he owed their support not to any desire for an absolute monarchy, but to a resistance to a power which seemed likely to exceed that of royalty itself. Henry, therefore, made no attempt to revoke the Great Charter; and widely different as his real sentiments and desires may have been, he assented to those measures of constitutional government which were laid before him. But the parliament of Winchester was not proof against personal animosities, and it passed heavy sentences against the family and some of the adherents of Leicester, at the same time depriving the citizens of London of their charter.

Those were not the times in which such measures would be quietly submitted to. In every part of the kingdom some baron raised the standard of insurrection, and maintained a desultory warfare upon the troops and property of the king. Simon de Montfort the younger, with a small band of men, maintained a position for months in the isles of Axholme and Ely, while his retainers still held the castle of Kenilworth against repeated attacks. The Cinque Ports preserved an obstinate defence, and in the forests of Hampshire the famous Adam Gourdon defied the royal authority. This baron was one of the most gallant soldiers of his time, and from the recesses of the forest he conducted rapid movements against the royal troops, inflicting upon them heavy losses. Prince Edward took the field against the rebels, and during two years he had full opportunity of gratifying his taste for war.

He passed hither and thither throughout the country, striking a blow now in this direction, now in that, and with varying success.

All the efforts of the prince proved unavailing to bring the insurgents to submission, and it became necessary to relax the stringent measures of punishment which had been adopted, and to make a display of clemency on the part of the government, as an inducement to the rebels to lay down their arms. For this purpose a committee was appointed, consisting of twelve bishops and barons, and their award, known as the "Dictum de Kenilworth," was formally adopted by the king and parliament. This award appears to have been generally received with satisfaction; but at this juncture the Earl of Gloucester quarrelled with the king, and assumed a warlike attitude, asserting that the Dictum of Kenilworth was not sufficiently lenient, nor such as the barons had a right to expect. The citizens of London, indignant at the loss of their charter, witnessed the dissension between the king and Gloucester with great satisfaction, and when the earl took up arms they opened their gates to receive him. But Gloucester was ill-prepared to maintain the contest on which he had entered, and at the approach of the royal army he demanded leave to negotiate. The permission was granted, and Gloucester obtained a pardon for himself on condition of entire submission to the king, while the Londoners purchased their safety for a fine of 25,000 marks.

Henry was naturally of a humane disposition, and he was further dissuaded from harsh measures by the letters of the Pope, who at this time exerted his influence in the cause of humanity and mercy. The determined attitude of the people also showed very clearly the wisdom of such a course of action.* It is not an easy thing to conquer Englishmen, even by Englishmen, and the king had good reason to dread the prolonged hostility of his stubborn subjects. It would appear, however, that one chivalrous act on the part of Prince Edward contributed in no small degree to extinguish the spirit of disaffection. In a battle fought in a wood near Alton, the prince encountered the redoubtable Adam Gourdon in single combat. The prince struck him from his horse, and when the vanquished knight lay at his mercy, instead of dispatching him Edward gave him his life, and, on the same night, presented him honourably to the queen, and obtained for him a full pardon. The story ends like a romance, for we are informed that the prince "took Sir Adam de Gourdon into his especial favour, and was ever afterwards faithfully served by him."

On the 18th of November, 1267, a Parliament was held at Marlborough, in which the king adopted some of the most important enactments of the Earl of Leicester, and added to them other laws equally calculated to promote the welfare of the people. The resistance of the insurgents, which was by no means unreasonable, was almost immediately removed by these measures; one after another the barons threw down their arms, the last to do so being the fugitives of the Isle of Ely. These at length joined in accepting the Dictum de Kenilworth, which they had seen scrupulously fulfilled in the case of others.

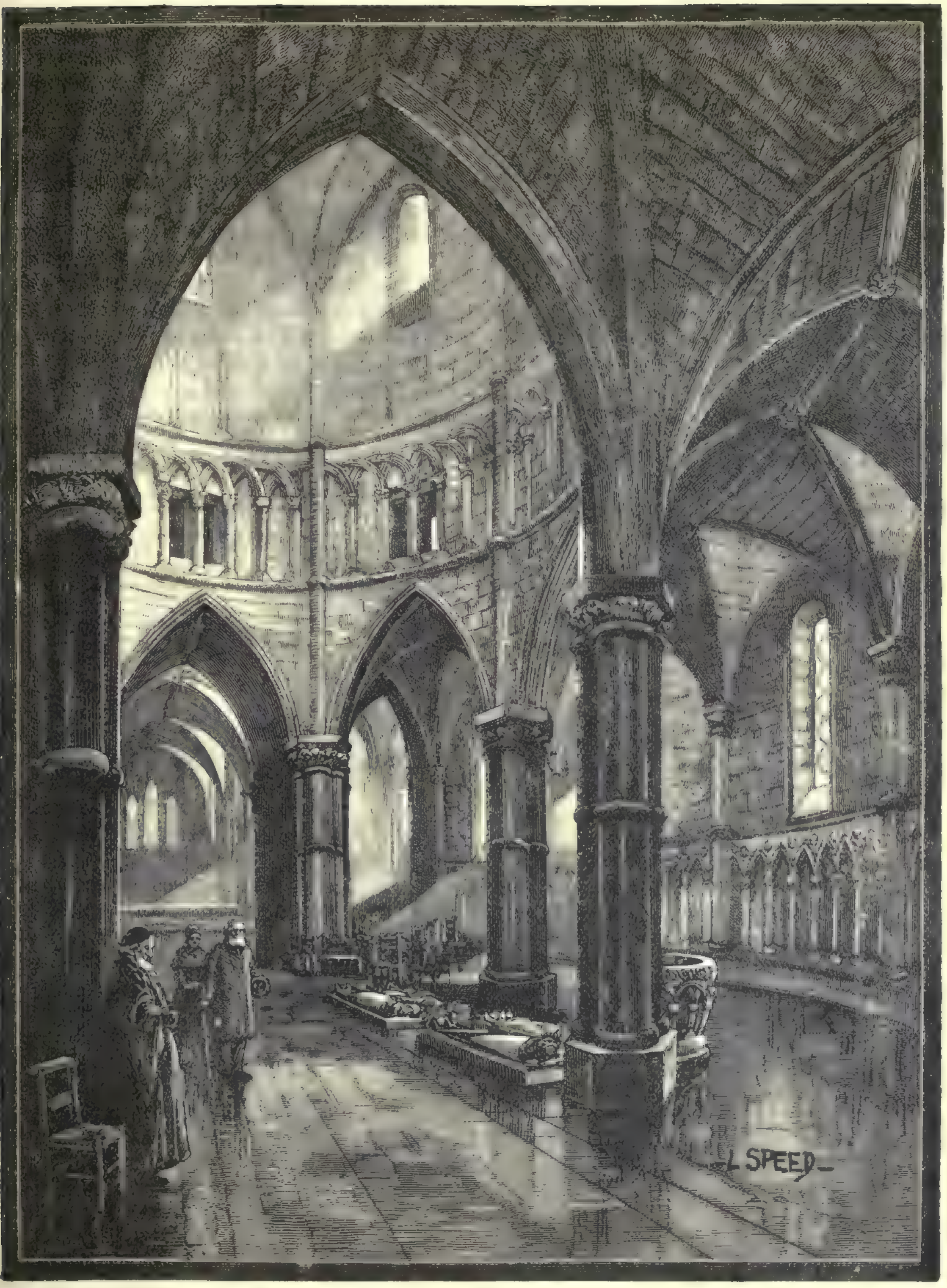
The country being now restored to a state of tranquillity, Prince Edward took the cross, and determined to proceed to the Holy Land. The papal legate had actively urged him to take this step, and he had the example of Louis IX., afterwards called Saint Louis, who had lately departed on a second crusade. Before quitting the country, Edward took measures which displayed a high degree of wisdom and foresight, having for their object to preserve the peace of the realm during his absence. Among these was a new charter, securing to the citizens of London the restoration of their liberties, and a free pardon to all those nobles who still remained proscribed by the king. In the month of July, 1270, the prince departed with his wife Eleanor, his cousin Henry, the son of the King of the Romans, and nearly 200 English nobles and knights of high degree. The best and bravest of the chivalry of England had assembled round their gallant prince, with all the pomp and pageantry with which the nobles of that age marched forth to war; few, indeed, among them were likely ever to return; but such considerations affected them little, while the Church followed them with its blessing, and the minstrels accompanied them to sing the story of their prowess, and to raise their name from the dust. With the belief that he should attain honour here, and happiness in heaven, the soldier of the Cross might hurl a double defiance at death, and bear an undaunted brow over the deserts of Syria and the mountains of Judæa.

The young Henry d'Almaine, the son of the King of the Romans, was one of the first to perish in this disastrous expedition. The manner of his death was unusually tragic. He had been dispatched back to England by Edward upon some secret mission, and took his way through Italy, passing through the city of Viterbo, where a new

Pope was then being elected. One morning, at an early hour, when he was engaged in saying prayers in one of the churches, he was suddenly aroused by a well-known voice at his side, which exclaimed, in menacing tones, "Thou traitor, thou shalt not escape us!" Turning round hastily, he perceived his two cousins, Simon and Guy de Montfort, who, with their mother the Countess of Leicester, had been driven out of England. The Countess was King Henry's sister, and her sons referred this harsh measure to the influence of the King of the Romans, who had ever been considered as their bitterest enemy. The two de Montforts were in complete armour, and, drawing their swords, they advanced upon their cousin Henry, who, utterly without means of defence, clung to the altar before which he had knelt, while two priests who were in the church threw themselves before him. But his foes were implacable: they neither respected the sanctuary, nor the persons of the ministers of God. The two priests were slain before the altar, and Henry, after being pierced with many wounds, was dragged outside of the church, where his body was mutilated by the murderers, in revenge for the indignities which had been inflicted upon the corpse of their father. They then effected their escape to the castle of the Count Aldobrandini, one of whose daughters had been married to Guy de Montfort, and by whom, it is related, they were protected from the consequences of their infamous deed.

PRINCE EDWARD INTRODUCING ADAM GOURDON TO THE QUEEN. (*See p.* 311.)

The King of the Romans had lately married a young German bride, and he was then occupying himself with feastings and displays, still believing that he should live to call himself Emperor of Germany. But the death of his son was a fatal blow to such vain ambition, and the shock affected him so severely that he died in December, 1271. In the following winter the English king was attacked by an illness which also proved mortal. His last moments were characterised by great demonstrations of piety, and Henry III. followed his brother to the grave on the 16th of November, 1272. The abbey church of St. Peter at Westminster had been rebuilt by him, and he desired that his bones should be laid there, in the



INTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE CHURCH, LONDON. *(See p. 815.)*

grave formerly occupied by Edward the Confessor. The remains of that saintly king had been removed by Henry, and placed in a golden shrine.

As the body of the king was about to be lowered into the grave, the barons who were present placed their hands in turn upon it, and took an oath of allegiance to Edward, then absent in the Holy Land. Henry III. died at the age of sixty-five years, during fifty-six of which he had worn the crown. A few words only are needed to sum up the character of this prince as it is presented to us in contemporary records. He was certainly not without good qualities, which would probably have been more conspicuous in a humbler sphere of life. He was, as had been said of one of his predecessors, rather a monk than a king; he was humane, generous, true to his friends, but he was guided in the choice of those friends rather by his own inclinations than by any regard for the public good, or for the characters of the persons whom he so distinguished. He was remarkable for weaknesses rather than for vices; but in the case of one placed in the seat of authority, it may be considered that such weaknesses are not less than vicious, and may be productive of more serious injury to the governed than positive vices. Few men who have occupied the English throne have rendered themselves so thoroughly contemptible in the eyes of all men as did Henry III. During the whole of his long reign, from the regency of the Earl of Pembroke to the assumption of power by the Earl of Leicester, Henry was a king only in name, and in those instances where he exercised the royal authority, he did so for purposes of exaction and extortion of money from his oppressed subjects.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ARCHITECTURE OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

Transition from Norman to Gothic Architecture—The Period of Change—The Early English Style—Examples and Characteristics of the Style—Towers—Windows—Doorways—Porches—Buttresses—Pillars—Arches—Mouldings and Ornaments—Fronts.

THE history of architecture is the history of change, sometimes gradual, sometimes sudden, but always change. People and nations change; new ideas spring up among them; new wants are created, and Architecture has to minister to these wants. A necessity arises and has to be met; this suggests a new idea, which, carried out, leads to still further changes. The direction being once given, new forms of beauty are elicited, which are eagerly followed out, until at length scarcely a trace remains of the form from which they sprang. This was pre-eminently the case with Gothic Architecture. The necessity arose from the vaulting of spaces of unequal sides; the Norman semicircular arch could not meet this difficulty; and it could be met only by using a semicircular arch for the longer side, and a pointed one for the shorter. The pointed arch was thus introduced, and it was soon seen that it offered great facilities for construction, and also for beauty of form. A change was thus commenced which ended only with the entire disuse of the semicircular arch, and the establishment of what we now call Gothic Architecture. This has been divided into three distinct styles, answering to certain periods of time, as below:—

EARLY ENGLISH, or Thirteenth Century, extending from the commencement of the reign of John to the close of that of Henry III.

DECORATED, or Fourteenth Century, from the commencement of the reign of Edward I. to the end of that of Edward III.

PERPENDICULAR, or Fifteenth Century, from the commencement of the reign of Richard II. to the end of that of Henry VII.

The latter part of each of these periods was one of transition, and therefore the terms Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Century must be taken only in a general sense.

In the last chapter on architecture (*see p.* 214), we slightly traced the transitions from the heavy masses of the pure Norman buildings, to the comparatively light ones which succeeded; but it will be necessary here to enlarge a little more on the subject. The change commenced in the latter part of the reign of Henry II., continued to increase partly through that of Richard I when, towards the end of his reign, it emerged into the succeeding style; the heavy Norman architecture gradually gave way, greater lightness and loftiness were introduced in the piers, the capitals were richly covered with foliage more closely resembling the Corinthian form, the angles of the abacus were frequently cut off, the mouldings lost much of their Norman character, and the tooth ornament. which is so characteristic of the next style, began to be introduced. The pointed arch was used along with the round one, both in pier arches and in windows and doors, and throughout this period we find a mixture of the two styles, the new growing, as it were, from the ruins of the old, until, in the beginning of the thirteenth century, it rose in all its purity, and the cumbrous Norman disappeared. Of the buildings of the Transition period, the following may be mentioned. Canterbury Cathedral (1175 to 1184) was alluded to before as the most valuable, in showing the gradual change from one style to the other. The round portico of the Temple Church, London (1185), displays many of the characteristics of both styles, the pointed arch being used for the piers, but the round arch for the clerestory windows and arcades. The hall of the castle of Oakham, now used as the County Hall, shows in its capitals and corbels some of the finest sculpture we possess of this period. Oxford Cathedral is of this date, and exhibits a curious example of the alternate use of the pointed and round-headed arch in the windows, and for the support of the central tower. Rothwell Church, Northamptonshire, is also of this date, the west door being a good example of a pointed arch with Norman ornaments, while the capitals of the shafts display more of the character of the Early English.

In the buildings of this transition there is frequently much picturesque beauty, the sculptures are executed with great freedom and variety of design, and the details of the two styles harmonise well together. The abandonment of Norman forms and the adoption of the new style were so gradual, that we can scarcely determine when the latter begins, for we see in the earlier examples of Early English some Norman feature or other occasionally remaining, but about the beginning of the thirteenth century these seem to have disappeared.

The style which succeeded the transition was named by Beckman the Early English, and by that name it is commonly known. Many of the finest buildings we have are in this style; most of our cathedrals have portions of it, and one at least—Salisbury—is built entirely in it.

The earliest building of pure Early English is the choir of Lincoln Cathedral, and it is curious to find that at this early date, 1195, the Norman ideas had been entirely laid aside. This building exhibits the style not only in its utmost purity, but in its greatest beauty; all its details are conceived and executed with the greatest delicacy and freedom, and all who wish to see this style in perfection should view the choir of Lincoln. The nave is in the same style, but is about fifty years later, and is much plainer.

The cathedral of Salisbury is, with the exception of the spire, almost wholly in this style; but it is much plainer in its details than Lincoln, for which reason, and from its lancet windows being wider than usual, it is not so pleasing in its general appearance as most buildings of this order.

The Galilee, or western porch, of Ely Cathedral (1215) is one of the richest and most beautiful examples of Early English in the kingdom. The choir of Rochester (1225) and a great part of Worcester Cathedral are also good examples. Wells Cathedral is a well-known example, and its west front, with its gorgeous display of statuary, is the finest design of the kind we have (1239). Another magnificent front, entirely different from anything else, is that of Peterborough Cathedral, with its three splendid and lofty arches (1238). The body of the Temple Church, which was added to the more ancient round church in 1240, and the Chapter Houses of Lichfield and Oxford, also belong to the style under consideration, as do also numerous parish churches in all parts of the kingdom.

Many of our finest monastic remains belong also to this period.

Of the domestic buildings of this epoch, examples still remain in various parts of the kingdom either of entire houses or portions of houses, of which the following are some of the principal:—Aydon Castle, Northumberland; Little Wenham Hall, Sussex; and Stoke Say, Shropshire; the last being a rather late example.

Early English buildings are chiefly distinguished from the Norman by their greater comparative lightness, and the prevalence of vertical lines instead of horizontal. Externally, we find the buildings much more lofty, and lighted by long, narrow-pointed windows; the buttresses, instead of being little more than pilasters, as in the Norman style, have a bold projection, and, being generally finished with either pediments or pinnacles, add greatly to the effect of the building.

The roofs, too, in consequence of the greater facility of vaulting, are considerably higher in pitch than the Norman; and the towers, being usually surmounted by spires, add further to the appearance of loftiness, and make the contrast between them and the Norman still more marked.

Internally, we find that the heavy masses of piers are replaced by bundles of slender shafts, which support pointed arches and light and lofty vaulting, instead of the round arches and flat ceilings or heavy vaults of the Norman style. The architects having found the power which the new principle gave them, seem to have run to the opposite extreme of their former work, and to have carried out the new idea with the utmost temerity.

TOWERS.—Early English church towers, as was said above, are generally surmounted by a spire, which is sometimes very lofty, and either plain or ribbed at the angles, and sometimes crocketted. It sometimes rises from a parapet, and at others fits on the top of the tower, when it is called a *broach* spire. In the best specimens of towers, an arcade runs along the upper belfry storey, some of the arches of which are pierced for windows. There is usually a richly-moulded door on the west side, and the middle storey has, in general, only a plain window. The buttresses either overlap the angles or project at right angles to the side.

WINDOWS.—The single light windows are, almost without exception, of the kind known as lancet windows, that is, long and narrow, and with pointed heads. They are quite plain as a rule, and are so characteristic of the style that it has been called the *lancet style.* They are sometimes in pairs, threes, fives, or sevens, with a general dripstone extending over all. The window in the transept of York Cathedral, well known as the "Five Sisters," is a beautiful example of the combination of five very long and graceful lancets, and, being filled with elaborately-pencilled stained glass, has a fine and solemn effect. Some good examples also occur in the south transept of Beverley Minster. These are all richly moulded, and have shafts in the jambs; but in small churches the windows are frequently quite plain, having only a simple dripstone. Circular windows are also used, as well as windows of an acutely-pointed oval form. Both these forms are found in the transept of Beverley Minster, to which we have already had occasion to allude. Where only two lancets are used, there is frequently a small circle or a lozenge pierced in the wall above the lancets, but under the dripstone, and which, in the inside, formed one window. These openings were in time enlarged, and, by an easy transition, regular tracery was formed; and we find in the later period of this style, when it was verging on the next, windows of two or three lights, with circles of tracery in the head. This was the origin of the tracery which was afterwards to form so conspicuous a feature, and on which the chief beauty of the succeeding styles mainly depended.

DOORWAYS. — These are almost universally deeply recessed and richly moulded, having shafts with capitals and bases on the jambs, and frequently ornamented with the tooth and other ornaments in the head. They are almost always pointed, but the round arch is still, in some few instances, retained, particularly in double doors when two arches have to be combined in one; but, in all cases, they may be distinguished from the Norman by their deeply-cut round and hollow mouldings, as well as by the capitals and bases of the shafts.

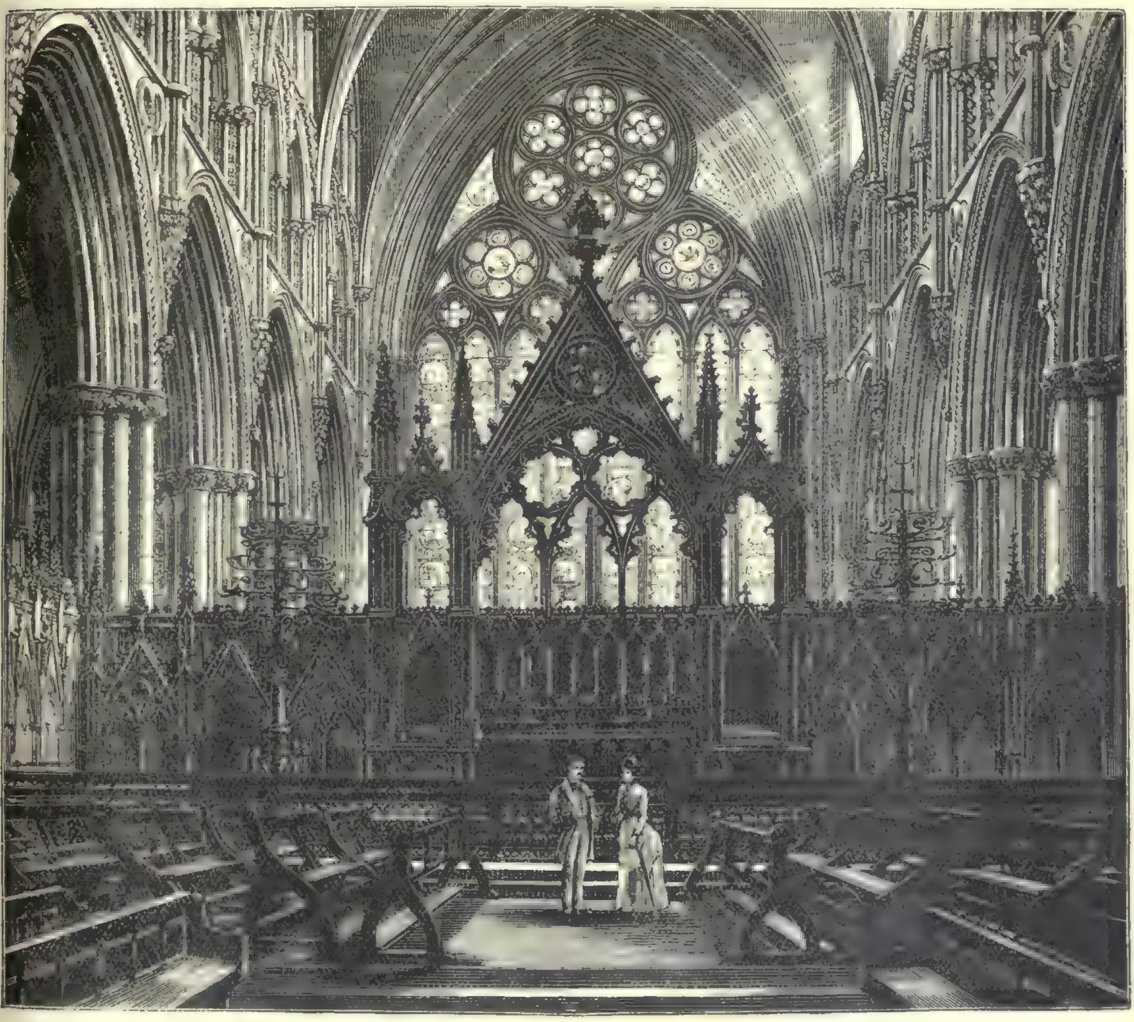
PORCHES. — The Early English porch differs from the Norman in being brought forward from the wall, leaving a considerable space between that and the front of the porch. This space is generally lighted by open windows on the sides, and ornamented in the interior with arcades, and having a stone bench running down each side. The front usually terminates in a very acutely-pointed gable, sometimes plain and sometimes moulded, and having a rich doorway, which is in general elaborately moulded and ornamented with the tooth ornament. The jambs have rows of shafts with capitals and bases, similar to the doorways before described, but frequently much more rich.

BUTTRESSES.—Unlike those of Norman buildings, the buttresses of this period project boldly from the wall, and tend greatly to shake off the flatness of appearance so observable in the former style. They are commonly finished by pediments, and are sometimes connected by arches with the clerestory, when they are called *flying buttresses.*

PINNACLES are now used, but they are more like turrets, being much larger than those of the succeeding styles. They are in general ornamented with small shafts and arches.

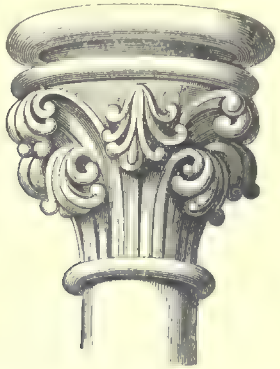
PIERS AND PILLARS.—It is in these, more perhaps than in anything else, that we see the difference between a Norman and an Early

English building. In the former, the architects, being deficient in mediæval skill, sought to remedy this defect, and to give strength to their buildings, by piling together large masses of masonry; while in the latter period, trusting to their scientific knowledge and the new principle of vaulting which they had just developed, they gradually reduced the strength of their piers, first by cutting their heavy round mass into a bundle of pillars all connected together, and afterwards separating these pillars, so that at the last the piers frequently consisted only of a central pillar, surrounded by a number of small detached shafts connected with the central one merely by the capital and base, and by bands placed at intervals on the shafts. Some fine specimens of this kind of pillar occur at Salisbury, where the lightness is carried to such excess that it seems wonderful how such slender shafts can support such heavy weights. These elaborate pillars are found only in the cathedrals or large churches; in smaller buildings the pillars are generally plain, either round or octagonal; but they may always be distinguished by the moulding and foliage of their capitals, and by their bases.



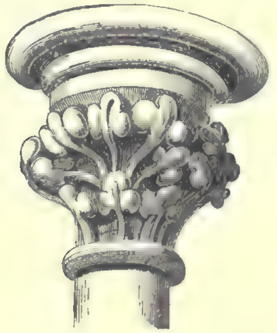
THE CHOIR OF LINCOLN CATHEDRAL. (*See p.* 315.)
(*From a photograph by Frith and Co.*)

Capitals, Foliage, and Bases.—These differ in many essential particulars from those of the Norman period, though in early buildings some of the Norman characters still remain. The abacus, the upper moulding or member of the capital, is in Norman work square; in *pure* Early English it is circular; its section in the first is square, sloped with the lower edge, or chamfered off; in the last it is moulded, having two bold round mouldings, with a deep hollow between



CAPITAL FROM SALISBURY CATHEDRAL.

them. The foliage of this period is very different from that of any other. It consists of a kind of leaf rising, with a stiff stem, from the neck-moulding of the capital, and turning over in various graceful forms under the abacus. It is from the circumstance of its rising from a stem that it is sometimes called *stiff-leaved foliage;* but nothing can be farther from stiffness, the utmost grace and elegance being displayed in its design and execution. It sometimes takes the form shown in the specimen from Salisbury, and

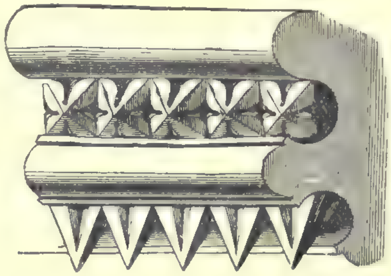


CAPITAL FROM LINCOLN CATHEDRAL.

sometimes that of a trefoil, as in the one from Lincoln. The *bases* are well moulded, the general section being that of two round mouldings, the lower projecting beyond the upper, with a deep hollow between.

Arches.—These are in most cases acutely pointed, but no general rule can be given, as much variety in form prevailed at this period. The round arch is still occasionally used, particularly in triforiums, as at York. In plain parish churches the pier arches are frequently only plainly chamfered, but in large buildings they are commonly deeply and elaborately moulded, and relieved with lines of tooth ornament.

Mouldings and Ornaments.—These are of the greatest importance in all the styles of Gothic architecture, as they serve to distinguish one style from another when other tests fail. In the Early English they are particularly distinct and striking, and consist chiefly of bold rounds separated by deep hollows, thus producing an effect of light and shade much more remarkable than that produced by the Norman mouldings. Intermixed with these mouldings, and frequently occupying one or more of the deep hollows, is an ornament known as the "tooth ornament" or "dog's-tooth," which is as characteristic of the Early English style as the zigzag is of the Norman. It consists of a series of small pyramids cut into the form of four leaves, and these, when acute and seen in profile, have somewhat the appearance of a row of teeth. It is profusely used in all situations where ornament can be introduced. Flat surfaces are frequently ornamented with foliage, or cut into small squares, each of which is filled with a flower. This kind of work is called *Diaper.*



TOOTH ORNAMENT FROM LINCOLN CATHEDRAL.

The Fronts of Early English buildings are, in general, very fine compositions, and though plainer in detail than those of the succeeding styles, they have more elegance of proportion. A good idea of their general arrangement may be formed from the south transept of Beverley Minster. As compared with the fronts of the buildings of the Norman period, they are remarkable for the increase of the space devoted to windows; and stained glass has by this time become a necessary feature in church decoration.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE REIGN OF EDWARD I.

Accession of Edward—His Adventures while on Crusade—Death of St. Louis—Arrival of Edward at Acre—Fall of Nazareth—Events at Acre—Departure from Palestine—Edward in Italy The "Little Battle of Châlons"—Dealings with the Flemings—Edward lands at Dover—Persecution of the Jews Edward's Designs on Wales—Character of the Welsh—Rupture with Llewelyn—Submission of the Welsh—Conduct of David—Second Welsh Rising—Death of Llewelyn—Execution of David—Annexation of Wales—Edward on the Continent—Sketch of Scottish History—Attack of the Norwegians—Deaths in the Royal Family—Death of Alexander Candidature of Robert Bruce—Death of the Maid of Norway—Candidates for the Throne—Meeting at Norham—Edward's Supremacy Acknowledged—He Decides in favour of Baliol.

IMMEDIATELY after the funeral of Henry III., the barons proclaimed his son Edward, then absent on the crusade, to be king. Walter Merton was nominated chancellor of the kingdom, and the Earl of Gloucester, the Earl of Cornwall the candidate for the Sicilian throne, and Walter Gifford, Archbishop of York, were appointed regents. So wise were the measures taken, and so general was the assent of all parties, that no disturbance of the public peace took place, as had hitherto frequently happened on the death of a king. Prince Edward was accepted by the people as their ruler, and his accession was attended with less difficulty or opposition than that of any of his predecessors.

When Louis IX. departed on his second expedition to the Holy Land, he turned aside to attack the Bey of Tunis, and, instead of proceeding direct to Syria, landed on the shores of Africa. This deviation from his original course was probably due to the representations of his brother, Charles of Anjou, who, in the battle of Grandella (1266), had won from Manfred the crown of Italy. There was some pretence of a claim to tribute possessed by the kings of Sicily against Tunis, but it is probable that the real object of the expedition lay in the hope of plundering that immense wealth which was supposed to be treasured up in the African cities.

The forces of Louis soon made themselves masters of the town of Carthage, but they had landed during the summer, and the excessive heat of that unaccustomed climate, added to the want of good water and provision, produced severe sickness among the crusaders. The character of Louis IX. is one with few parallels in any age. Perversions of the religious sentiment were common at the time in which he lived: he was not free from their influence, and his piety was mingled with superstition and austerity. But, in times of difficulty and danger, when the hypocrite falls away, and the true is distinguished from the false, his fine humanity and nobility of soul shone out in a manner which demands from posterity its highest meed of honour. While his soldiers were dying by hundreds around him, he was in the midst of them, giving up every comfort and running every risk for the sake of administering to them. At length he was himself smitten with the disease, and, feeling his death approaching, he lay down calmly to await the inevitable event. In his last moments we are informed that he thought only of the sufferings of his family, and of the best form of words which might tend to console them. "My friends," he said, "grieve not for me: I have finished my course. It is right that I, as your chief, should lead the way. One day you must all follow me; keep yourselves ready for the journey." Such were the last words of this remarkable man, known in French history by the name of Saint Louis.

When Edward received information of the course taken by his ally, he also proceeded to Tunis; but on his arrival there, he found that Louis was dead, and that less than one half of his army were remaining. The progress of the disease, however, had been stayed, and the remaining portion of the French army, deprived of the guidance of their leader, had made terms with the Bey of Tunis, and appeared rather disposed to stay where they were than to tempt further perils in the Holy Land. The English soldiers appear to have been in some degree infected with the same pusillanimous spirit. They re-crossed the Mediterranean to Sicily, and passed the winter at Trapani. Edward had restored unanimity to his troops by the declaration, which he made with all the solemnity of an oath, that if every man of them should desert him, he would go on to Acre attended by his groom.

On breaking up his winter quarters, Edward found that his effective force did not exceed 1,000 men. With these he set sail from Sicily early in the spring, and proceeded to Acre, one of the few conquests of the crusaders in the East which still remained to them. Small as the force was with which Edward landed, his arrival produced consternation among the Moslems, and proportionate joy among the Christians. The fame of Richard Cœur-de-Lion was still fresh in their minds, and Edward, already distinguished in the field of war, might be expected to emulate the deeds of that renowned king.

At the time of Edward's arrival Acre was threatened by the Sultan of Babylon, who had assembled an army without its walls, and had made preparations for an assault. When the ships of the English prince appeared in the distance, the Sultan at once retreated into the desert, and passed into Egypt. Edward led his army into the interior, and carried the city of Nazareth by storm. Nearly two hundred years had passed since the banner of the Cross first waved over Jerusalem, and its streets ran with blood shed by Christian hands. In these two hundred years the world had made some progress in humanity. The advance of the arts of life, and the spread of commerce, had done something to enhance the value of human life, and to promote that intellectual activity which is ever opposed to bloodshed. But these things had no influence over the spirit of fanaticism—the most cruel spirit that has oppressed mankind in the guise of an angel of light. The crusaders still believed that the blood of the Moslem was an acceptable sacrifice to Heaven; they still believed that the Saracens ought to be excluded from that mercy which every Christian might ask from his fellow, and that in deeds of wholesale murder they were doing God service. The Moslems at Nazareth were butchered as at Jerusalem; and the knightly Edward led and directed the slaughter.

Soon after the massacre, the prince, with many of his soldiers, was attacked by sickness, and was compelled to return to Acre. Here the army of the Cross remained for a period of fifteen months, which seem to have been passed in inactivity. Some few skirmishes took place with the Saracens, during which the crusaders maintained their old reputation for valour, and some few incursions were made upon the surrounding country, which, in one instance, resulted in the plunder of a caravan, and in another in the capture of two castles; but these were the only advantages gained by the Christian troops during that period. This was not the result of indolence on the part of Edward, or of any lack of will for more important operations, but it appears that the force at his command was insufficient for such purposes. The number of his troops did not exceed 7,000 men, who were composed of all the nations of Europe, were imperfectly disciplined, and after a time showed themselves disaffected towards his authority. Such proved to be the case when they found that Edward had brought little money with him, and that he received no reinforcements.

On the other hand, the town of Acre had been so strongly fortified, in some degree by Edward himself, that the Moslem leaders were deterred from attacking it. The presence of the English prince, however, caused them great annoyance; and since open measures were out of the question, they determined to get rid of him by assassination. An elaborate scheme was contrived for that purpose. The Emir of Jaffa sent presents to the prince, with letters expressing his desire of becoming a Christian. Edward returned a courteous reply, and on this pretence a lengthened correspondence took place between them. The messengers of the Emir, frequently visiting the prince, were at length permitted to come and go without question or examination. One evening when Edward was lying in his tent, unarmed and alone, the servant of the Emir appeared at the door, and made his usual obeisance. Edward bade him enter, and as he did so and knelt to present a letter, he suddenly drew a dagger with the other hand, and made a blow at the prince's heart. Edward, whose personal strength was little inferior to that of Cœur-de-Lion, caught his hand and turned the dagger aside, receiving a slight wound in the arm. He then threw the murderer to the ground and slew him with his own weapon.

The appearance of the prince's wound soon showed that the dagger had been poisoned, and Edward therefore made his will, and believed that his last hour was approaching. But there was an English surgeon at Acre whose skill appears to have been greater than was usual in his day, and who cut away the envenomed parts of the wound. The order of the Templars also were noted for their knowledge of medicine, and the Grand Master of the order sent his choicest drugs to assist the cure. These means, or a natural strength of constitution, subdued the effects of the poison, and the prince recovered. His wife Eleanor, who was famed for her virtues, and who was tenderly attached to him, probably nursed him with the utmost devotion to promote his recovery; but the account of her having sucked the poison from his wound must be rejected. The story, like others which have been received as forming part of English history, is little else than a poet's fiction, and when referred to the chronicles of the time, falls to the ground for want of corroborative evidence.

The sultan, who had other enemies to engage his attention, now adopted more legitimate means of getting rid of the troublesome invaders. He sent messengers to Edward with offers of peace, and a truce was ultimately concluded for ten years. Edward had received from his father urgent entreaties to return, and he was probably glad of an opportunity of putting an end to an irksome period of inactivity. At the close of the year 1272, he set sail from Acre for Sicily. On his arrival at Trapani, he was met by an invitation from Gregory X., the reigning Pope, to visit him at Rome. The Pontiff, who was newly elected, had, as Archbishop of Liège, accompanied Edward to Palestine, and a firm friendship had arisen between them. The prince therefore accepted the invitation and, having crossed the straits of Messina, he proceeded by land through the south of Italy.

On passing through Calabria, he was met by messengers who informed him of the death of his father. The news affected him very deeply. Charles of Anjou, who was then with him, and who was a man of a remarkably unfeeling and ferocious character, expressed his surprise at such a demonstration of grief. Referring to an infant son of Edward and Eleanor, who had lately died, he told the prince that he appeared to mourn more for the death of his old father than for his own child. Edward replied, "The loss of my child is one that I may hope to repair, but the death of a father is an irreparable loss."

VIEW IN TUNIS.

When Edward arrived at Rome (February, 1273), the Pope was absent at Civita Vecchia, and thither the prince followed him. Edward met with a warm and hospitable reception from the Pontiff, and while in his presence he demanded vengeance upon the murderers of Henry d'Almaine. But the demand came too late. Simon de Montfort was already dead, his brother Guy had disappeared, and his place of refuge was not known, while the Count Aldobrandini was too powerful a noble to be proceeded against, otherwise than by a nominal examination, which produced no result. It was clear that the count was guilty, not of the murder, but only of giving shelter to the assassins, one of whom was his son-in-law; and under these circumstances, the English king was compelled to restrain his desire for vengeance.

Quitting Civita Vecchia, Edward continued his journey through northern Italy. Everywhere the ardent children of the South received him with welcome and honour. The enthusiasm for the crusades, soon to be altogether extinguished, showed itself as strongly now as in the days of Robert or of Richard, and the people hailed the young English king with the title of Champion of the Cross. Their sympathies were excited less by his deeds of personal prowess in the East—which, limited as they were, were exaggerated by the imaginative colouring of the minstrels—than by the wound he had received in the holy cause. They remembered, too, that amidst the general apathy of Europe he was the only prince who yet remained to bear aloft the banner of the Cross.

Edward crossed the Alps, and took his way through France to Paris, having received by the way various messengers, who made him acquainted with the state of affairs in England. At Paris he was honourably entertained by the French king, Philip the Rash, to whom he rendered homage for those territories of which Philip was feudal suzerain. It is matter for surprise that after so long an absence, and when a throne was waiting his acceptance, Edward should show no desire to return to England. It is at least evident that he must have felt full confidence in the security of his succession or in his own power of suppressing rebellion. Instead of proceeding from Paris to his own country, he took the way to Guienne, where he remained for several months. The real motives for this step are by no means clear, but it is probable that Edward had cause to suspect the existence of certain plots against his life. The Pope had warned him to beware of the swords of assassins, and he had reason to dread the ambition of Philip, whose character was very different from that of his father, and who was believed to entertain designs for obtaining possession of all the Continental provinces held by the English.

The suspicions of Edward appear to have been confirmed by an incident which took place in May, 1274, when he was still in Guienne. According to the usages of chivalry, it was permitted for one knight to challenge another to a trial of skill in the tournament; and such a challenge would scarcely be refused by any man, whatever his degree, who had a regard for his knightly fame. The Count of Châlons, a distinguished soldier, sent a message of this kind to Edward, desiring to break a lance with him in the tournament. The warlike king had no desire to evade the challenge; and, waiving his high rank, he consented to meet the count upon even terms. On the day appointed, Edward rode to the spot, attended by an escort of a thousand men; but when he arrived there he saw to his surprise that his adversary was accompanied by nearly two thousand. The king had already heard rumours of some treachery said to be intended by the count, but, with the temper of a brave man, he had despised them. The military array before him now recalled these rumours to his memory, in a manner not to be disregarded. The intended tournament was converted into a sanguinary engagement, in which all the men of both sides took part, and Edward himself performed some gallant feats of arms.

The English, seeing the advantage of numbers so greatly on the side of the enemy, laid aside all the laws of chivalry, and determined to win the day as best they might. The cross-bowmen, whose skill was already noted throughout Europe, obtained an immediate advantage against the French foot-soldiers, and drove them from the field. They then joined in the unequal conflict of the cavalry, and stabbed the horses of many of the French knights, or cut their saddle-girths, and so brought them to the ground. The Count of Châlons, furious at the resistance he met with, forced his way to the king, and, after having in vain attempted to unhorse him with his lance, closed with him, and grasping him round the neck, endeavoured to drag him down. The count was celebrated for his great strength, but the king was no less remarkable for that quality, and he remained firmly in his saddle; while, forcing his horse suddenly to one side, the count was pulled from his saddle, and fell heavily to the ground. He was speedily remounted by some of his own party, but he was so severely wounded or bruised that he called for quarter. Enraged at his treachery, Edward dealt him several heavy blows by way of reply, and then, indeed, gave him his life, but compelled him to surrender his sword, and accept the boon from the hands of a common soldier—an act by which, according to the laws of chivalry, the count was disgraced for ever. In spite of the disparity of numbers, the result of this engagement was decidedly in favour of the English. They took many of the French knights prisoners, and great numbers of the foot-soldiers were butchered. So fierce was the affray, and so large a number of those engaged were slain, that it was afterwards known by the name of the "little battle of Châlons."

Having thus read a lesson to all conspirators against his person, Edward at length made preparations to return to England. Having sent directions for his coronation, he took his way through France, passing through the town of Montreuil. Here he stopped to arrange some disputes which had arisen in the previous reign between the English and the Flemings, and which are worthy of notice, as illustrating the commercial relations of the two countries in those days. For a certain number of years previously, the Counts of Flanders had been accustomed to supply for the service of the Kings of England a certain number of foot-soldiers, who were received on hire. In the reign of Henry III. these supplies ceased to be demanded; but the Countess of Flanders claimed a sum of money as arrears of pay, and on payment being refused, she seized all the English wool—then largely exported from the country—to be found in her territory. The Flemings were then the chief manufacturers of woollen and other cloths, and Henry retaliated by detaining all their manufactured goods then in England, and by prohibiting all commerce between the two countries. This prohibition caused great loss and damage to the Flemings, whose looms were thus rendered idle, and their workmen left without employment. The object of the Countess was the renewal of trade with England, and to this end she made application to Edward, and offered a public apology for the wrong which had been committed. The king acted with wisdom on this occasion, and, having sought the advice of some experienced London merchants, he wisely removed the prohibition.

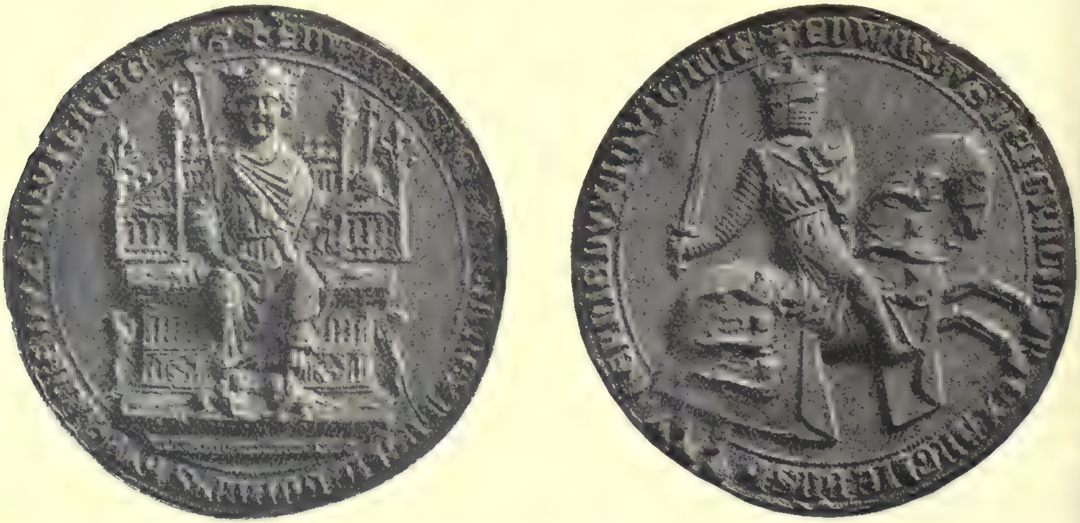
Edward landed at Dover on the 2nd of August, 1274, and seventeen days afterwards he was crowned, with his wife Eleanor, at Westminster. The return of the king from the Holy Land was hailed by the people with great demonstrations of joy. According to Holinshed, the king and queen were received "with all joy that might be devised. The streets were hung with rich cloths of silk, arras, and tapestry; the aldermen and burgesses of the city threw out of their windows handfuls of gold and silver, to signify the great gladness which they conceived of his safe return; the conduits ran plentifully with white wine and red, that each creature might drink his fill." So readily did the people forget the injustice and cruelties of their former monarchs, and so enthusiastically did they welcome each new ruler, who they were willing to hope might bless the land with peace and prosperity.

Edward's first exercise of power was by acts of extreme and merciless tyranny, directed, not towards his Christian subjects, whose liberties he showed no disposition to invade, but towards the unhappy Jews, who had already suffered such repeated persecutions that it may almost be considered matter for surprise that any of their race were left in the country. On ascending the throne, Edward found the Royal treasury almost exhausted, and there is no doubt that his proceedings against the Jews were dictated by the necessity of raising money. That fanatical spirit which had led him to direct the slaughter of unresisting Moslems, may probably have justified him in his own eyes in his cruel persecutions of Jews, who were no less regarded as infidels, and as unworthy of the protection of the laws. The pretext put forward—for the day had arrived when at least some pretext was required—was that the Jews had tampered with the coinage of the realm, which had been found to be generally clipped and adulterated. There was no evidence whatever to fix upon this unhappy people as the authors of the crime, but their riches offered a temptation to cupidity, and their helplessness admitted of their being condemned without fear of the consequences. The hatred against the Jews was universal, and the appearance of one of them before a Christian court was followed as a matter of course by his condemnation.

The clipped coin was so common as to be found all over the kingdom; but immediately such a piece of money was discovered in the possession of a Jew, he was seized, submitted to the form of a trial, and hanged without mercy. It is related that 280 of both sexes were executed in London, besides which, large numbers were put to death in other towns. The property of all those who were thus judicially murdered reverted to the Crown; and, therefore, it is not difficult to see why these acts of persecution were indulged in to so great an extent.

When the royal coffers had been replenished by such means as these, Edward directed his attention to carrying out certain schemes, on which he entered with calmness and determination. Influenced by as restless an ambition as any of his predecessors, he directed his efforts to a field on which, as it appeared, they had the best prospect of ultimate success. Instead of carrying his army across the Channel to subdue provinces between which and his throne the sea would continue to flow, he proposed to himself the conquest of the whole island of Great Britain.

The first expedition of Edward was directed against the Welsh, whom so many of the Anglo-Norman kings had in vain attempted to subdue. Politically considered, there is no doubt that this expedition was wisely ordered, and that the early conquest of those brave mountaineers has proved in the highest degree beneficial to this country. At the time of the accession of Edward, civilisation had made important progress in England, while in Wales it had been stationary; but if we examine the social condition of that people after the Conquest, as described in the writings of a contemporary, and one of their own countrymen, we shall find their national character depicted in colours which attract our respect and admiration. In time of war they were brave, or even fierce; but when the war was over, they showed that they could appreciate the blessings of peace, and they betook themselves to their ordinary avocations, and exchanged the rites of hospitality. In spite of the aggressive wars made upon them from time to time, any Englishman who visited them in their mountains, as a simple traveller without arms, was sure of safe conduct and a kind reception. If he arrived in the morning he was entertained until the evening by the young women, who played and sang to him with the harp. There was a harp in every cottage, and with it was to be found at least one person whose skill could bring out its sweetest sounds. The people are described as possessed of great natural dignity and freedom of speech, which gave them confidence even in replying to princes.


GREAT SEAL OF EDWARD I.

If we may credit this account by one of their countrymen, we find here one of those instances given in history of a people displaying many of the amenities of social life while yet in the infancy of civilisation; deriving their code of honour, laws, and manners from the influences of unwritten memorials of the past—from songs and traditions. The mountain maidens, who cheered the tired traveller with the music of the harp, had no better clothing than the skins of sheep and goats. The chiefs, whose sway over a thousand warriors was absolute, and who bore themselves with undaunted mien in the presence of kings, kept state among bare walls and benches and rode out to meet the English chivalry upon the rough ponies of the mountains. It is related that when Henry II. passed through the country, he looked with a contemptuous eye upon the poverty of the inhabitants, until he perceived among them a pride greater than his own, and based not upon gaudy trappings or outward show, but upon the consciousness of a manhood which had no need of decorations. "These people are poor," said a mountaineer to the king, "but such as they are, thou shalt never subdue them; that is reserved for God in His wrath."

During the contests between Henry III. and the De Montfort faction, Llewelyn, the chief of the north of Wales, had supported the cause of the Earl of Leicester, and, at the battle of Evesham, had fought on his side. When that final struggle was over, and the Welsh chieftain had returned to his native hills, he still retained his regard for the fallen family of De Montfort, and sent to offer his hand in marriage to Eleanor, daughter of the deceased earl. The offer was accepted, and the young lady, in company with her brother Almeric, set sail from France to reach her affianced husband; but the vessel having been intercepted by some English ships, the bride and her escort were conveyed to the court of Edward, who detained them prisoners. Exasperated by this act of oppression, Llewelyn collected together his men-at-arms, and determined to revenge himself for the insult he had sustained.

EDWARD I.

It is not certain when the first acts of hostility took place on the part of the Welsh or English; but there is no doubt that Edward had for some time past been pursuing, by various covert measures, the schemes he had in view. He administered bribes without stint among the mountain chiefs, and, profiting by long-standing feuds which existed between them, and which were insidiously fomented, he secured many of them to his side. Actuated by a feeling of jealousy, David, the brother of Llewelyn, placed himself among those who gathered round the royal standard, and with him was Rees-ap-Meredith, the chief or prince of South Wales.

The ground of quarrel which Edward preferred against Llewelyn was that the latter had refused to obey the summons to appear before the king, and render homage as one of the vassals of the Crown. On receiving that summons, Llewelyn replied that his life was in danger from the number of his enemies, who, in violation of a recent treaty between him and Edward, had been received at the court. The Welsh prince demanded that a safe conduct should be granted to him; that ten hostages, chosen from the English nobility, should be sent as security for his safe return, and that his bride should immediately be given up to him. Edward refused these conditions, with the exception of the safe conduct, and it is evident that he had no real desire that his vassal should withdraw his refusal. The king's preparations for the intended expedition were now matured; a large army was ready to take the field, and the Church had excommunicated the Welsh prince as a traitor to the Crown.

At Easter, 1277, Edward began his march to Wales, and having crossed the Dee near Chester, he entered Flintshire. A fleet, which had been dispatched for the purpose, co-operated with him, by cutting off from Llewelyn all supplies from the Isle of Anglesey. The expedition was well timed; for when these operations had been effectually carried out, and the Welsh prince driven to the mountains, the storms of winter aided the attacks of his enemies. Deprived of food and succour, the condition of Llewelyn soon became wretched in the extreme, and he was compelled to submit to such terms of peace as Edward might please to offer. Those terms were hard indeed. A payment of £50,000 was demanded, together with the cession of the whole of Llewelyn's territories, except the Isle of Anglesey, which was also to revert to the crown in case the prince died without heir male, and for which, during his life, he was to pay a yearly rent of 1,000 marks. The king afterwards remitted the enormous ransom demanded; and, had he not done so, it may be questioned whether it would have been possible to raise so much money throughout Wales. In return for these concessions of Llewelyn, Edward promised to release Eleanor de Montfort; but he showed considerable reluctance to fulfil that promise, and many months elapsed before the Welsh prince obtained his bride.

Edward spared no pains to secure the advantage he had obtained. He rewarded liberally those among the Welsh chiefs who had supported him, and bestowed what are called honours upon those traitors to their native soil. David received the order of knighthood at the king's hands, and with it the hand of the daughter of the Earl of Ferrers. But when the Welsh prince had escaped from the influence of the court, and breathed once more the free air of the hills, he regretted the folly which had induced him to sell the independence of his country, and to league himself with its oppressors. Other causes soon operated to increase this feeling. The English, not content with the large territories they had conquered, made inroads upon the land secured by treaty to the natives, cutting down the timber and committing other depredations. If the chiefs were exasperated by these proceedings, the people were unanimous in their hatred of their enemies, and in cries for vengeance. Allusion has been already made to the prophet Merlin, and to the effect exercised upon his fellow-countrymen by the predictions which bore his name. One of these, which was now remembered and repeated, was to the effect that when the English money should become circular, the Prince of Wales should be crowned in London. Edward had lately ordered a new coinage of round halfpence and farthings, and had issued a decree forbidding the penny to be divided into quarters, as had previously been done. The Welsh, therefore, thought they saw the time arrived to which the prediction referred, and, interpreting that dark saying according to their own wild wishes, believed that it foreshadowed nothing less than the subjugation of the whole island to the countrymen of the prophet.

The impetuous descendants of the ancient Britons scarcely needed such old stories as these to prompt them to vengeance. David forgot the rewards he had received at the king's hands, and having effected a reconciliation with his brother Llewelyn, agreed to act in concert with him. On the 22nd of March, 1282, David suddenly descended from the Flintshire hills with a body of troops, and surprised the strong castle of Hawarden. Roger Clifford, the justiciary, was taken in his bed and made prisoner, and on the part of the garrison little resistance was made. This success emboldened the natives, who now rose on all sides to join the standard of their chiefs. Llewelyn led his men against the castles of Flint and Rhuddlan, and, though repulsed from these fortresses, he inflicted great damage upon the English in other places, forcing them from their strongholds, and often driving them across the borders.

When the news of the insurrection was brought to Edward he refused to believe it; but it has been supposed that his surprise was rather feigned than real, and that he was not displeased to have a pretext for another expedition which should complete his conquest, and place it on a firm basis. He obtained money by means of a forced loan, levied upon all his subjects who had money to pay; and having collected an army, he advanced once more into North Wales, attended, as before, by a fleet. Among his forces were a large body of pioneers, who opened a passage for the troops through the woods and marshes, and enabled him to beat back the Welsh as far as the foot of Snowdon. The accounts which have reached us of this campaign are very obscure; and it is difficult to trace the successive encounters between the mountaineers and their assailants. It would appear, however, that the advantage was by no means all on one side, and that a pitched battle took place, in which the army of the king was badly beaten. The fleet of the king had occupied the Isle of Anglesey, whence the troops directed their offensive operations. A bridge of boats was laid across the Menai Straits, where now the suspension bridge of Telford and the iron tube of Stephenson afford a safe and convenient passage. The Welsh had raised some entrenchments on the mainland, and there they awaited the expected attack. During the absence of Edward, a body of his troops crossed over the straits before the bridge was quite completed, so that they were compelled to wade some distance through the water to reach the shore. The Welsh made no opposition to their landing, and even suffered them to approach their works; but meanwhile the tide was rising, and presently reached a height which rendered it impossible for the English to gain their boats. While in this position the mountaineers rushed out upon them and drove them into the sea, where all those who escaped the sword were speedily engulfed. The loss to the English on this occasion numbered thirteen knights, seventeen esquires, and several hundred men-at-arms. Another engagement afterwards took place, at which Edward himself was defeated, and compelled to flee from the field, leaving several of his chief nobles among the number of the dead.

These successes caused great joy to Llewelyn and his associates, though the struggle which they so heroically maintained was, in reality, hopeless. Fresh troops were constantly arriving to co-operate with the king, while his numerous fleet offered them protection and support. Among the reinforcements were some mountaineers of the Basque provinces, well suited for that mode of warfare, in which agility of limb and rapidity of motion possessed a decided advantage over the slow operations of the English troops. The Basques followed the Welsh to their fastnesses, and there fought them in their own way, usually with the advantage of numbers. The natives were thus dislodged from their defences, driven from mountain to mountain, and compelled, inch by inch, to retreat.

But while such was the frequent result of these conflicts, the combined efforts of the Welsh leaders were attended with the success which has been described. Llewelyn trusted that the elements to which he owed his former defeat would now exert an influence in his favour, and that the rigours of winter would compel the king to quit the country. But Edward was too able a general to suffer himself to be so defeated. He undertook more vigorous measures, and while pressing the natives to the utmost with his own forces, he despatched a second army, which had recently been collected, into South Wales, for the purpose of attacking the enemy in the rear. Llewelyn immediately marched to meet this new danger, leaving his brother David to oppose the king. At Builth, in the valley of the Wye, the Welsh prince found himself suddenly in the presence of a large force of English troops, who were encamped on the opposite side of the river. Llewelyn had advanced in front of his men, and descended a hill to watch the motions of the enemy. He had entered a barn, either for shelter or repose, when he was surprised by a party of English who had crossed the river. Hopeless as the contest was, the prince turned desperately on his assailants, struck his last blow for home and liberty, and then fell, pierced through the body by a spear. His head was cut off, and, by direction of Edward, was sent to London, where it was placed in the Tower, with a crown of ivy round the brows. This order was given by the king, in derision of the prophecy of Merlin.

The independence of Wales was buried in the grave of Llewelyn. The king had, indeed, some further resistance to encounter, but it was unorganised and soon subdued, as far as active hostilities were concerned. Many of the native chiefs at once gave in their submission to the crown, but David maintained his opposition for six months, surrounded by a few followers, in the fastnesses of the mountains. At length he was betrayed into his enemies' hands, and was carried in chains to the castle of Rhuddlan. In the following month Edward brought the case of the captive before a parliament, hastily and irregularly summoned at Acton Burnell. That parliament assented obsequiously to whatever the king described as just and necessary; and, consequently, they condemned the Welsh prince to be dragged by a horse to the place of execution, because, after receiving the order of knighthood from the king, he had turned traitor; to be hanged, because he had caused the murder of the knights in Hawarden Castle; to have his bowels burned, because he had profaned the sacredness of Palm Sunday, the day on which the deed was committed; and to be quartered, and have his limbs hung up in different places, because he had conspired against the king's life. This shamefu sentence was not only carried into effect, but served for many years as a precedent in cases of high treason.

LLEWELYN'S LAST FIGHT. (*See p.* 327.)

Edward now directed his attention to more peaceful measures for securing his conquest. He remained in Wales during another year, and occupied himself in enticing the natives as far as possible from their uncultivated habits, and in prevailing upon them to adopt fixed residences and English customs. To this end he divided the country into shires and hundreds, introduced English laws, which were generally enforced, and took measures for the restoration of tranquillity. He also gave charters conferring important privileges on some of the Welsh towns, and amongst others to Rhuddlan, Aberystwith, and Carnarvon. It happened that Queen Eleanor bore her husband a son in the castle of Carnarvon, and Edward availed himself of that circumstance for political purposes. He called together a number of the chief men of the land, to whom he

EDWARD PRESENTING HIS INFANT SON TO THE WELSH. (*After the Picture by Sir John Gilbert, R.A.*)

presented the infant as born among them, and of the same country. The child, he said, was Welsh, and as such, he should be their prince. They supposed that a separate government was intended, since the infant had an elder brother, who undoubtedly was the heir to the English throne. The ardent nature of the Welsh eagerly caught at this revived hope of independence, and for some time they appeared to have regarded their young prince with feelings of loyalty and affection. Before long, however, the Prince Alphonso, the elder brother, died, and it became evident that such hopes were illusory. From this time the principality of Wales became permanently annexed to the crown, and the title of Prince of Wales was given to the eldest son of the kings of England.

Edward secured his conquest by fortifying anew the castles of Conway and Carnarvon, and by building other fortresses, in which he placed strong garrisons and large stores of provisions. The lands at the foot of Snowdon he divided among his English barons, who also built castles and strongholds for purposes of defence. Such measures proved to be necessary for many years afterwards, for the mountaineers rebelled against these haughty and tyrannical lords, and showed their hatred by continued acts of hostility. Cruelty on the one hand was met by bloody deeds of vengeance on the other, and many of the English nobles sustained a perpetual siege in the strongholds they had built.

After the subjugation of Wales, four years passed away, during which Edward pursued no farther his schemes of aggrandisement. Showing little interest in the internal affairs of his kingdom, he passed over to the Continent, where his great ability was displayed in the arrangement of a dispute respecting the island of Sicily, which had arisen between the Kings of France, Aragon, and the house of Anjou. His award was, however, repudiated. Meanwhile, the English people murmured at his absence; the word "government" was associated with the person of the king, and disorders had been increasing which it was believed his presence would terminate. Edward found himself compelled to return to his own country, and soon after he had done so, the course of events in Scotland aroused his ambition in that direction. It will be necessary briefly to trace the narrative of Scottish history, from the reign of Malcolm Canmore to the date at which we have now arrived.

The influence exercised upon the Scottish people by their queen, Margaret, the sister of Edgar Atheling, was in a high degree beneficial. The fair Saxon introduced among the fierce subjects of her husband the softer manners, the religion, and the dawning civilisation of the south. Malcolm, to whom the name of Canmore (Great-head) was given, a rude and savage warrior, had conceived for his young bride an affection which knew no bounds. Ignorant of the truths of Christianity, he was induced to join in those devotional services which she habitually practised; and from a human love he learned, as other men have learned, to recognise the influence of a holier feeling. He could not read her books of prayer, but he would kiss them humbly to show his veneration for their use. His power was freely placed in the hands of his young queen, and as freely used by her in reforming abuses in the Church, and in the introduction of various arts and accomplishments.

The people were savage and uncultivated, but they were generous, enthusiastic, and by no means deficient in a sort of rude chivalry. They had a wild imagination, fed by dark and gloomy traditions. They peopled the caves, the woods, the rivers, and the mountains with spirits, elves, giants, and dragons; and are we to wonder that the Scots should at a very remote period have evinced an enthusiastic admiration for song and poetry; that the harper was to be found amongst the officers who composed the personal state of the sovereign; and that the country maintained a privileged race of wandering minstrels, who eagerly seized on the prevailing superstitions and romantic legends, and wove them, in rude but sometimes very expressive versification, into their stories and ballads; who were welcome guests at the gate of every feudal castle, and fondly beloved by the great body of the people?

While Margaret was spreading among the people the desire for knowledge, Malcolm was enlarging his dominions by conquest; and at the death of this prince (1093) Scotland was, comparatively speaking, a united and consolidated nation. Then, however, various disorders took place; and when Alexander, son of Canmore, at length obtained possession of the throne, the people seemed to have returned to their former condition of barbarism. In 1124 he was succeeded by his brother David, who, like his father, was sagacious and brave, an affectionate husband, and a gallant soldier. David, as the uncle of the Empress Matilda, daughter of Henry I., considered himself bound to support the title of that princess to the crown. The battle of Northallerton, already described (*see p.* 171), resulted in a severe defeat to the Scottish king, chiefly owing to the insubordination of a portion of his army. David exerted his power for the improvement of the condition of his subjects; he founded many monastic establishments, in which the learning of the times was preserved, and the sons of the nobles received their education.

David was succeeded by his son Malcolm IV. (1153), a brave and energetic prince, but whose negotiations with England were unfortunate.

Henry II., then in full possession of his power, obtained from the Scottish king the resumption of a portion of Northumberland, which had been ceded by Stephen. The more remote parts of his kingdom were consolidated by Malcolm, who subdued a formidable insurrection among the fierce natives of Galloway. In the year 1165, Malcolm IV. died, and was succeeded by his son William, surnamed the Lion. This prince it was who, having been made prisoner by Henry II., agreed to purchase his liberty by surrendering the independence of his kingdom. This shameful bargain was rescinded by Richard Cœur-de-Lion, who restored the relative positions of the two kingdoms to their former footing. Thus the kingdom of Scotland, properly so called, was restored to its independence, while the possessions in Westmoreland, Cumberland, Northumberland, and Lothian continued to be held by a feudatory title from the English crown.

William was succeeded by his son Alexander II., in 1214. During the reign of this prince there were few events of importance. He occupied himself rather with the internal affairs of the country than with schemes of foreign aggression, and his policy was attended, on the whole, with favourable results. His son, Alexander III., succeeded to the throne in 1249, and the peace and prosperity by which nearly the whole of his reign was distinguished were to be referred in a great measure to the wisdom and patriotism of his ancestors. As a proof of the advance which had been made by the nation in power, we are told by Matthew Paris that at this time the army of the king amounted to 100,000 men and 1,000 well-appointed horsemen. Alexander III. was only nine years of age when his father died, but in order to prevent foreign interference with the affairs of the kingdom, the boy was immediately crowned at Scone, and was knighted by the Bishop of St. Andrews. Two years afterwards the English king gave his daughter Margaret in marriage to Alexander; and the nuptials between the two children were celebrated with great pomp at York, in December, 1251.

The only important danger which threatened Alexander arose from the attacks of the Norwegians, whose old quarrel with the Scots respecting the islands of the Hebrides was renewed in this reign. In the summer of 1264, when the young king had just attained to the years of manhood, Haco, of Norway, a powerful king and a renowned warrior, set sail, at the head of a numerous force, for the Scottish shores. The Norwegian fleet arrived in the Frith of Clyde, while Alexander, assembling his troops, advanced to meet the invaders. A storm arose, by which the foreign armament sustained considerable damage; and its violence was scarcely abated when Haco reached the Bay of Largs, near the mouth of the Clyde. Here he was met and attacked by the Scottish army, which arrived in successive divisions. A protracted conflict of three days' duration took place there, and the plain, still covered with cairns and rude monuments of the slain, bears witness to the bloody and obstinate character of the struggle. Alexander at length gained a complete victory; the remnant of the invaders retreated to their ships, and effected their escape to the islands of Orkney, where the redoubtable Haco died, either from wounds received in the battle, or from mortification at its result. The victory of Largs terminated for ever the wars between Scotland and Norway; and, after a lapse of seventeen years, the two nations cemented their peace by a marriage between Margaret, the daughter of Alexander, and the youthful Eric, Haco's successor.

During a period of twenty years succeeding the Norwegian expedition, we may believe that the kingdom of Scotland enjoyed a condition of uninterrupted prosperity. The young king governed his people wisely and well, and undisturbed by enemies from without, he was able to repress the quarrels of those rival factions of the nobility which for many years had maintained towards each other a position of active or passive hostility. But heavy clouds were gathering round the future of this prosperous king, and at the moment of its greatest glory the royal house of Scotland was doomed to perish from the land. Margaret of England, the queen of Alexander, had died in 1275. Besides the daughter, whose marriage had restored peace to the nation, two sons had been born to him, one of whom died in childhood. In the year 1283 the Queen of Norway expired, leaving only an infant daughter, who had also received the loved name of Margaret. A few months later the prince of Scotland followed his sister to the grave, and thus the king, while yet in the prime of manhood, was bereft of wife and children.

Anxious to secure the succession to his granddaughter, who was called the Maiden of Norway, Alexander summoned a council or parliament at Scone, and those present bound themselves to accept the Norwegian princess as their sovereign, in the event of the king dying without issue. In the hope of obtaining a direct heir, Alexander took for a second wife Yolande, the daughter of the Count of Dreux. The new queen was young and very beautiful, but the marriage was described as attended by evil omens, and the events which followed it might well assist the imagination of the chroniclers as to the portents they describe. Within a year afterwards Alexander was riding at nightfall from Kinghorn to Inverkeithing, on the north shore of the Frith of Forth, when the horse, starting or stumbling, rolled with him over a precipice. Thus died a prince whom the nation mourned as the last and worthiest of his line (1285).

The first proceeding of the estates of Scotland was to fulfil their vow by appointing a regency to exercise the functions of government during the minority of the infant queen. But it was evident that the succession of the little Maiden of Norway was scarcely likely to be secured by such a measure. A female sovereign was new to the people, and the same prejudice existed against her as that which, in England, had excluded from the throne the daughter of Henry I. It was therefore scarcely to be expected that the turbulent chiefs would preserve their allegiance to a child then in a foreign country, and partly of foreign extraction. It was not long before one strong party formed the design of placing its chief upon the throne, to the exclusion of the Maiden of Norway. Robert Bruce could show some relationship to the royal family, his mother, Isabella, being one of the daughters of David, Earl of Huntingdon, brother of William the Lion. This chief, who was supported by many of the Scottish nobility, held a meeting of his adherents on the 20th of September, 1286. The scene of the assembly was Turnberry Castle, in Ayrshire, the seat of Bruce's son, Robert Bruce, who had received the title of Earl of Carrick, in right of his wife. An agreement was entered into, by which all the persons present bound themselves to adhere to one another on all occasions, and against all persons, saving their allegiance to the King of England, and to him who should gain the kingdom of Scotland as the rightful heir of the late king. There appears little doubt that the real object of the meeting was to obtain the crown for Bruce, to which end they would have been willing to secure the assistance of Edward, by acknowledging him as feudal lord of Scotland. The English monarch, however, had other designs, which he proceeded to carry into effect.

Edward was the grand-uncle of the Maiden of Norway, and he, with her father Eric, might therefore be considered her natural guardian. The latter seems to have interested himself little about her fate; and neither paternal affection nor schemes of ambition prompted any active exertions in her cause. But with the English king the case was very different. Edward was one of the ablest and wisest monarchs of Europe, and, at the same time, the most powerful, ambitious, and unscrupulous. He had already succeeded in subduing the free people of Wales: and when the death of Alexander was made known, he perceived that the time was come when he might strike a powerful blow at the independence of Scotland. His first measures for this purpose seem to have been in themselves just and equitable, and to have been willingly accepted by the northern barons. He entered into a treaty with the chief nobles of the regency, and proposed an alliance between his son, the Prince of Wales, and the Maiden of Norway. The agreement was finally concluded at Salisbury, July, 1290. Articles were drawn up for securing the independence of Scotland, and they were solemnly sworn to by the English king. It is matter for doubt how far such an oath would have been kept had the match taken place, for it is known that Edward had secured to his own party some of the Scottish chiefs and, under pretence of guarding the peace of the country, had obtained possession of many castles and fortified places. But the scheme of a union between the two kingdoms by marriage was defeated by the early death of the Maid of Norway, who, having set sail for Britain, fell sick during the passage and, unable to pursue the voyage, landed on one of the Orkney Islands, where she expired, in her eighth year.

Edward was thus compelled either to resort to other measures for the purpose of securing his authority in Scotland, or at once to relinquish his designs upon that country. It is probable that so ambitious a monarch did not long hesitate between the two alternatives, and the result of his deliberations was a communication to his council to the effect that he "had it in his mind to bring under his dominion the king and kingdom of Scotland in the same manner that he had subdued the kingdom of Wales." The pretext on which he founded his pretended right to interfere in the affairs of Scotland was the claim which he advanced to be lord paramount of that country—a claim supported by his being in possession of the castles already alluded to, by virtue of the treaty of marriage between his son and the Maiden of Norway.

The line of William the Lion having been abruptly cut off, the heir to the crown would be found among the descendants of David, Earl of Huntingdon, his younger brother. The earl had one son and three daughters. The former died without issue; and of the latter, Margaret, the eldest, was married to Alan, of Galloway; the second, Isabella, to Robert Bruce; and the third, Ada, to Henry Hastings. The eldest daughter bore no son to her husband, but her daughter, Devorguilla, married John Balliol. The issue of this marriage was a son, John Balliol. The Robert Bruce already named, who in right of his wife was Earl of Carrick, was the son of Isabella, and John Hastings was the son of Ada. Between the rival claims of these nobles there could, in our day, be no difficulty in deciding—the laws of primogeniture clearly awarding the title to the descendant of the eldest branch. Such, indeed, was the generally recognised law at the time now referred to: but it was not so clearly settled as to preclude the possibility of dispute. When, therefore, the death of the young queen was known, it was doubtful how many claimants for the throne might present themselves, or how much of disorder and bloodshed might ensue before the title to the throne had been decided. The ambition of Edward, and the position he had assumed towards Scotland, excited the greatest apprehension amongst patriotic men, who saw misfortune and misrule about to succeed to the prosperity which the country had lately enjoyed.

NORHAM CASTLE. *(From a Photograph by J. Valentine, Dundee.)*

Edward, who was invited to decide the complicated question, requested the barons and the clergy of Scotland to meet him at Norham, a town on the English side of the Tweed. The summons was obeyed, and a conference took place on the 10th of May, 1291. Here Edward openly repeated the intention which he had already stated to his own barons, that he would dispose of the succession to the Scottish throne as lord paramount of that country, and he required that the Scots should immediately recognise his title and authority. It does not appear that the demand excited much surprise among the assembly, but they were not altogether unanimous in their assent, and a voice was heard to declare that the request of the king could only be replied to when the Scottish throne had been filled. Edward swore by the saints that he would "vindicate his just rights, or perish in the attempt." The proceedings here terminated, and were renewed on the following day, only to be further adjourned to the 2nd of June. Edward then prepared for a warlike demonstration, by sending to his barons in the northern counties, and requiring them to attend at Norham on the 3rd of June, with horses and men, as many as they could command.

The scene of the conference of the 2nd of June was a plain called Holywell Haugh, on the north bank of the Tweed, opposite Norham Castle, and on Scottish ground. Among the assembly were eight persons who preferred a claim to the crown, Robert Bruce being at their head. To him Robert Burnell, the Bishop of Bath and Chancellor of England, put the question whether he acknowledged King Edward as lord paramount of Scotland, and whether he was willing to submit to his authority and receive judgment from him. It is related, and on unquestionable authority, that Bruce freely and openly declared his assent, and that the remaining seven competitors followed his example. On the following day, John Balliol, a powerful chief, appeared, with another claimant of the title, and these two also assented to the demand.

It would appear that these proceedings had been in a large measure arranged beforehand. The two great claimants of the crown, Bruce and Balliol, had divided the major part of the assembled barons into two factions, each being anxious, before all things, for the success of its chief, and ready to act implicitly under his directions. It was evident that if either of the two competitors submitted to the arbitration of Edward, the other had no resource but to follow his example, since the power of the English king would otherwise certainly turn the scale. The absence of Balliol on the first day of the meeting has not been satisfactorily accounted for, but it is probable that he hung back from being the first to assent to demands which implied the surrender of the national independence. If such was his motive, it proves not that he was more patriotic, but less brave than his opponents, since we find him ready, without remonstrance, to follow the example which he was unwilling to offer. Edward appears to have previously determined in favour of Balliol, whether in consequence of the justice of his claim, as the descendant of the eldest sister, or from other reasons, cannot be ascertained. In spite, however, of that determination, he assumed the appearance of long and anxious deliberation before his judgment was finally given.

The ambition of Edward was patient and far-seeing. He had no intention of limiting his authority over Scotland to the barren feudal superiority which he now claimed; but his ulterior designs were concealed, and suffered to remain in abeyance until a favourable opportunity should occur for carrying them into effect. Of those who may be called the minor claimants to the Scottish crown, nearly all seem to have been brought forward merely to increase the difficulty of the question, and possibly that—their secondary right having been established—any of them might be made use of at a future time, in case of need. The whole tenor of Edward's conduct, as well as his words, lead us to the conclusion that he intended to subjugate Scotland, as he had already subjugated Wales, and that his present proceedings were simply the effect of calculation, as necessary preliminaries to that end.

The immediate result of the conference at Norham was the appointment of a number of commissioners, whose nominal duty it was to deliberate upon the question of the succession, and to examine the claims of the several competitors. On the 11th of June Edward was formally placed in possession of the Scottish kingdom, the regents relinquishing their authority in his favour, and the governors of the castles surrendering their trusts into his hands, with the reservation that within two months after the determination of the succession they should be restored to the sovereign who might be chosen. Robert Bruce, Balliol, and many of the Scottish chiefs, took the oath of homage to Edward on the 15th of June, and immediately afterwards the peace of the King of England, as lord paramount of Scotland, was proclaimed throughout the country.

The commissioners chosen at Norham proceeded to Berwick, and there, on the 3rd of August, met in council in the king's presence. The number of candidates, increased by Edward's secret intrigues, now reached to twelve, and one more was afterwards added, in the person of King Eric of Norway. The enlarged list of claimants rendered the choice still more uncertain; but before the time came for the decision, the right of the descendants of the Earl of Huntingdon was clearly shown, and the rest of the competitors withdrew from the contest. A year elapsed before the cause was finally decided. On the 15th of October, 1292, a Parliament held at Berwick declared in favour of the elder branch of the earl's family. The commissioners, who had failed to come to an agreement on this point, had previously resigned their functions. Another meeting was held in November, at which Edward declared his intention more plainly; and at length, on the 17th of that month, the king gave his award, at Berwick Castle, in favour of John Balliol. On doing so, he declared, as he had previously done at Norham, that the election of a king for Scotland should not in any way affect Edward's property in that country; thus reserving to himself still a territorial right in that kingdom. The seal of the Scottish regents was broken into four pieces, and placed in the treasury of Edward, in token of the pretended subjection of Scotland. On the 30th of November Balliol was crowned at Scone, and on the 26th of December he appeared before Edward at Newcastle, and took the oath of homage to him. It will be necessary here to suspend our narrative of Scottish affairs, for the purpose of following the course of events in England, which had considerable influence on the fortunes of the northern kingdom.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

REIGN OF EDWARD I. (*concluded*).

Banishment of the Jews—Edward's Restorative Measures—Edward's Continental Policy—Quarrel with France—Undeclared War—Edward Outwitted by Philip—Re-conquest of Wales—The War with France—Position of Balliol—He is placed under Restraint—Edward Marches Northwards—Fall of Berwick—Battle of Dunbar—Submission of Balliol and Scotland—Settlement of Scotland—Sir William Wallace—He heads the National Rising—Robert Bruce joins him—Submission of the Insurgents—Battle of Stirling Bridge—Invasion of England—Edward Defeats Wallace at Selkirk—Regency in Scotland—Oppression of the Clergy—The Barons refuse to help Edward—The Expedition to Flanders—A Constitutional Struggle—Peace with France—The Pope claims Scotland—Defeat of the English—Edward's Vengeance—Capture and Death of Wallace—Bruce takes his place—Death of Comyn—Defeats of the Scots—Death of Edward—His Character and Legislation—Sketch of the growth of the English Parliament.

THE persecutions of the Jews, which had taken place at the beginning of the reign of Edward, had little power to check the increase or destroy the prosperity of that extraordinary people. Having no country; living among strangers and enemies; deprived of all political standing, of all legitimate objects of ambition, even of reasonable security for his life, the Jew devoted those intellectual qualities, in which he was seldom deficient, to the pursuit of the one agent of power within his reach. Wealth alone could raise him from a condition of utter misery and contempt, give him a certain standing and importance among his fellow-men, and offer employment for his energies. If the favour of the law was to be bought, the wealthy Jew might hope to buy it, while for the poor there was no mercy. If he was derided and persecuted by the haughty sons of a happier race, he returned scorn for scorn, and revenged himself where he could by trading upon their necessities. If he became grovelling and avaricious, absorbed in a mean and unworthy passion, perhaps the fault should be ascribed less to him than to those whose unconquerable prejudices isolated him in the midst of his kind, and condemned him to the fate of Ishmael.

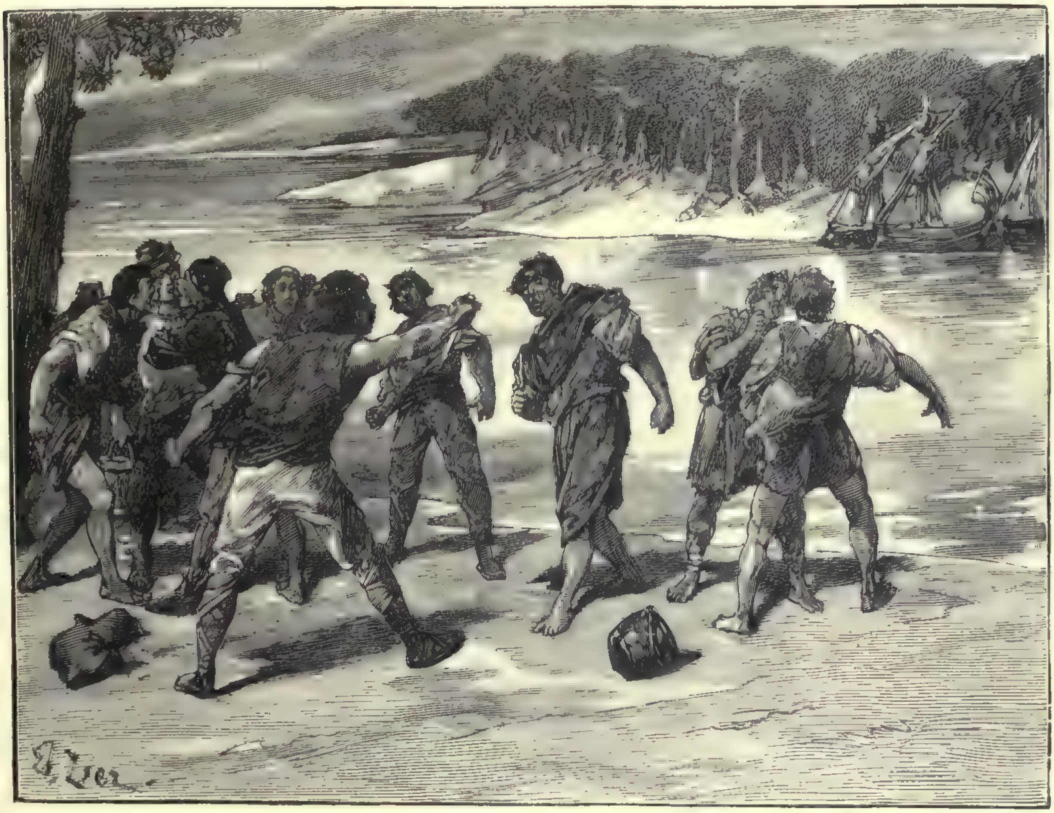
Thirteen years had passed since 300 men and women of the despised race had been hanged in the streets of London, when Edward found himself again in want of money; and this time he put in force a measure even more arbitrary, and more in defiance of all law and justice, than before. He ordered that every Jew in England, young or old, male or female, should be seized on an appointed day, and cast into the dungeons of his castles. Here they were confined until they had paid collectively a sum of £12,000 to the royal treasury. Not long afterwards further measures were taken against them, and this time, as it appeared, rather from a spirit of fanatical cruelty than for the sake of gain. In the year 1290 the king issued a proclamation, commanding all the Jews to quit the country within two months, under the penalty of death.

In spite of the cruelties they had suffered, their numbers had rather increased than diminished, and more than 16,000 persons were thus banished from the kingdom. They were permitted to carry with them only so much money as would pay the cost of their voyage, the rest of their goods and property being seized in the king's name. There is no doubt that large sums of money were obtained by the Crown in this barbarous fashion, and it may at first appear that such was the object of the king in directing this wholesale banishment. If so, it was certainly a short-sighted policy, inasmuch as the supplies which repeated exactions had continued to force from the Jews would now be permanently cut off.

EARL WARRENNE SHOWING HIS TITLE TO HIS ESTATES. *(See p. 337.)*

The mariners of the king's fleet proved ready agents of his tyrannous commands, and perceiving how little apparent prospect the Jews could have of redress for any injuries inflicted on them, the sailors in many cases stole the little money which the proscribed people possessed, and even drowned a number of them during the passage. The murderers, however, did not entirely escape punishment, for the king was by no means desirous that the royal example of plundering and slaying should be followed by his subjects. Some of the sailors were arraigned, and suffered death as the punishment of their misdeeds.

It is remarkable that, at the very time of these shameful proceedings against the Jews, the king was engaged in enacting various admirable laws for the protection of his Christian subjects, and the reforms thus instituted were immediately put in force. Perversion of justice again prevailed throughout the kingdom, insomuch that a few years later, when all the judges were indicted for bribery, only two of the whole number were pronounced innocent. The judges were compelled to pay heavy fines as the result of their condemnation. Other measures taken by the king for increasing his revenues proved less successful. Proceedings were instituted for the recovery of portions of the royal domains of which some of the barons had become possessed, and these nobles were required to show the titles by which they held their lands; but the demand excited such a determined resistance and such strong feelings of indignation, that the king was compelled to desist. It is related that when the royal commissioners presented themselves to Earl Warrenne, and required to see the titles of his estates, the earl unsheathed his sword, and stretched it out before them. "This," said he, "is the instrument by which I hold my lands, and by it I mean to defend them! Our ancestors, who came to this realm with William the Bastard, obtained their possessions by their good swords. The conquest was not made by him alone, nor for himself solely; our fathers bore their part, and were participants with him." Such language was not to be mistaken, and Edward found it prudent to leave the great barons alone.


THE SAILORS' QUARREL NEAR BAYONNE. (*See p.* 338.)

The recent successes of the English king necessarily excited attention and considerable alarm on the Continent. For a long time past the power of England had been increasing year by year, and the conquest of Wales and Scotland, which seemed to involve the union of the whole island under one ruler, made that power still further to be dreaded. Everything might be feared from a man of the character of Edward—ambitious, daring, and unscrupulous, and with the whole force of Britain at his command.

The animosity between the French and English kings seldom slept long, and on former occasions, when the Welsh or the Scots had been in arms against the King of England, they had received secretly either aid or encouragement from France. Now, however, Philip IV., surnamed the Fair, the reigning monarch of that country, adopted a different policy; and, without attempting to revive the waning patriotism of the Scottish nobles, he determined to avail himself of the moment when Edward was engaged in the north to attack the English territories on the Continent. Edward, however, was not unprepared for these hostile demonstrations; and, while directing his arms in other quarters, he had not neglected, by all those arts familiar to the state policy of the time, to protect himself against the probable designs of the French monarch. The Count of Savoy, one of the most powerful vassals of France, had been won to the side of Edward by gifts and promises, and similar means had secured the goodwill of the Emperor of Germany. Edward also allied himself with the Count of Bar by giving him his daughter Margaret in marriage. Other measures are said to have been employed by him; and the disaffection of a number of the subjects of Philip is referred by French writers to the influence of the King of England.

Such was the position of affairs when a matter, apparently of the least possible importance, led to an outbreak of hostilities between the two countries. Some English and Norman sailors met together at a watering-place near to Bayonne, and a quarrel took place as to which party should fill their casks first. One of the English sailors struck a Norman with his fist; the Norman drew a knife, and attempted to stab his assailant, who immediately closed with him, and in the scuffle the Norman was killed. The Englishman was carried out of danger by his shipmates; and when the Normans demanded satisfaction for the injury, the authorities of Bayonne, which city was in possession of the English, are said to have refused the request. The Normans, baffled in their vengeance, put to sea; and having met with a small vessel belonging to the English, they captured it. There was on board a merchant of Bayonne, whom they hung up to the yard-arm with a dog tied to his feet.

Such a proceeding was necessarily followed by retaliation on the part of the English, and the Normans were made to pay dearly for the savage act they had committed. The mariners of the Cinque Ports attacked them continually in the Channel, and every Norman who fell into their hands was butchered. Before long the sailors of other nations began to take part in this irregular warfare, the French and the Genoese taking the side of the Normans, and the mariners of Ireland and Holland ranking themselves on the side of the English. Many bloody encounters took place between the opposite parties, without any interference from their governments, the latter remaining passive spectators of these proceedings. The Normans, having collected a fleet of about 200 vessels, of different sizes, made a descent upon the coast of Gascony, hanged a number of sailors whom they took prisoners, and carried off large quantities of stores, with which they returned to St. Malo, in Brittany. No sooner were they safely at anchor than an English fleet appeared at the mouth of the harbour. The sailors of the Cinque Ports, with only about eighty ships, had set out to meet the enemy. The Normans accepted the challenge to decide the matter by a pitched battle, which was fought, by mutual agreement, at a spot on the coast. The result of the battle was decisive in favour of the English, who took the Norman ships and massacred all on board, no quarter being given in any case. The two nations might thus be said to have been at war for some time before their rulers took any part in the matter. The effect of this battle was to excite to the utmost the vindictive feelings of the French and their desire for vengeance. Philip, who was himself enraged at the result of the engagement, perceived that the time was come when the people would hail with delight the declaration of war with England, and when such a war might be undertaken with the best chance of success.

Philip assumed the right to punish the English king, who, as Duke of Aquitaine, might be said to be a vassal of the French Crown. Officers sent by Philip attempted to seize some of the English lands, but they were driven back by the troops in possession. He then summoned the "Duke of Aquitaine" to appear before his suzerain after the feast of Christmas. Edward considered it prudent not wholly to disregard this summons, and he sent his brother Edmund to arrange terms with Philip. On this occasion it would appear that Edward, influenced by the ties of blood, made choice of a bad instrument. The negotiation terminated by an agreement on the part of Edmund to surrender Gascony to the French king for a period of forty days, as a satisfaction for his wounded honour, receiving the promise of Philip that it should be faithfully given up at the expiration of that time.

The French king now declared himself satisfied; but when the forty days were over, and Edward demanded restitution of Gascony, he received the refusal which was to be anticipated. Philip now assumed a bolder front, declared that Edward had not fulfilled the duties of a vassal, and summoned him once more, as Duke of Aquitaine, to appear before his peers. The summons being disregarded, he declared him contumacious, and condemned him to the loss of all his estates in France. This declaration was immediately followed by active measures, while Edward, on his part, prepared for war with all his customary energy. He formally renounced his vassalage to the French Crown, and assembled a powerful fleet at Portsmouth. For several weeks the winds were contrary, and during that time the impatient monarch was compelled to remain in a condition of inactivity.

Meanwhile the Welsh, who probably were incited by Philip, broke out into insurrection, took possession of many castles and towns on their borders, and slaughtered great numbers of the English. Edward immediately led the larger part of his army into Wales, having first sent a body of troops into Gascony, and commanded his powerful fleet to attack and plunder the French coast. A number of sanguinary sea-fights took place between the French and English, and in nearly every instance the French were defeated with heavy loss.

The campaign of Edward in Wales was by no means brief or unattended with danger. The mountaineers once more distinguished themselves by an obstinate resistance, and the rigours of winter approached to add to the privations and difficulties of the royal troops. Several months passed away before the Welsh were again reduced to submission. Madoc, their leader, the foremost and best man in this new struggle for liberty, was at length compelled to surrender. and he. and some of the most dangerous chiefs, were cast into dungeons for life. Thus, after the country had been again ravaged, and the homes of great numbers of the people laid in ashes, the rebellion was quelled. The story which has long been current respecting the hanging of the Welsh bards by Edward, rests on no contemporary authority, and therefore must be rejected as devoid of truth. There is no question that the king was capable of that, or any other savage act by which vengeance for the past or advantage for the future could be obtained; but it is the business of history to illustrate a man's character by his actions, and not to deduce from that character a confirmation of doubtful statements.

No sooner was the submission of the Welsh complete than the position of affairs in Scotland again demanded Edward's presence, and compelled him to relinquish his intention of crossing the Channel in person. The nobles of Guienne had lately declared themselves in his favour, and thither the king despatched a small body of troops under the command of his brother Edmund. Soon after landing Edmund died, and the command fell upon the Earl of Lincoln, who attacked the French towns and fortresses with success, driving out the whole of the French garrisons. This state of things, however, was soon afterwards reversed. The towns were retaken by the forces of Philip, and his uncle, the Count of Artois, at the head of a well-appointed and numerous army, defeated the English in several engagements, and ultimately drove them out of the country, with the exception of a few towns on the coast. Reprisals took place, and the whole seaboard of Brittany was plundered by the English fleet, which inflicted great damage upon the inhabitants, and punished them with an indiscriminating cruelty. The French, with their allies, made similar attempts on this side of the Channel; and on one occasion they landed at Dover, and sacked the town while the male inhabitants were absent. The men of Dover returned to find many of their wives and children murdered, and they overtook the marauders before they could reach their ships, and slew several hundreds of them.

The policy of Edward towards Scotland had been insulting and imperious to a degree which can hardly be considered judicious. The king whom he had raised to the throne was thwarted in every assumption of independent sovereignty, and was made to feel that his oath of vassalage was no form, but a galling and bitter reality. Complaints against the government of Balliol were never wanting from his disaffected subjects, and these readily obtained the ear of Edward, who lost no opportunity of summoning the Scottish king to appear before him, and answer the charge of maladministration. It appears that when Balliol submitted to these demands, and presented himself in the English courts, Edward treated him with consideration; but when the Scottish monarch attempted to assert his independence, he was checked by measures of the utmost rigour. The submission of Balliol to his imperious master was complete, and although he at length was goaded to offer some resistance, this tardy show of spirit tends little to redeem his character from the unfavourable light in which it is viewed by history. Apologists for this degraded king have not been wanting, and have attempted to paint him as a man possessed of lofty qualities, who erred rather from overestimating his strength than from weakness or pusillanimity. His contemporaries among his own countrymen thought otherwise, and gave him a nickname, attributing to him an utter want of energy and ability. Posterity has generally concurred in this opinion, and the name of John Balliol has been inscribed on the least honourable page of Scottish history.

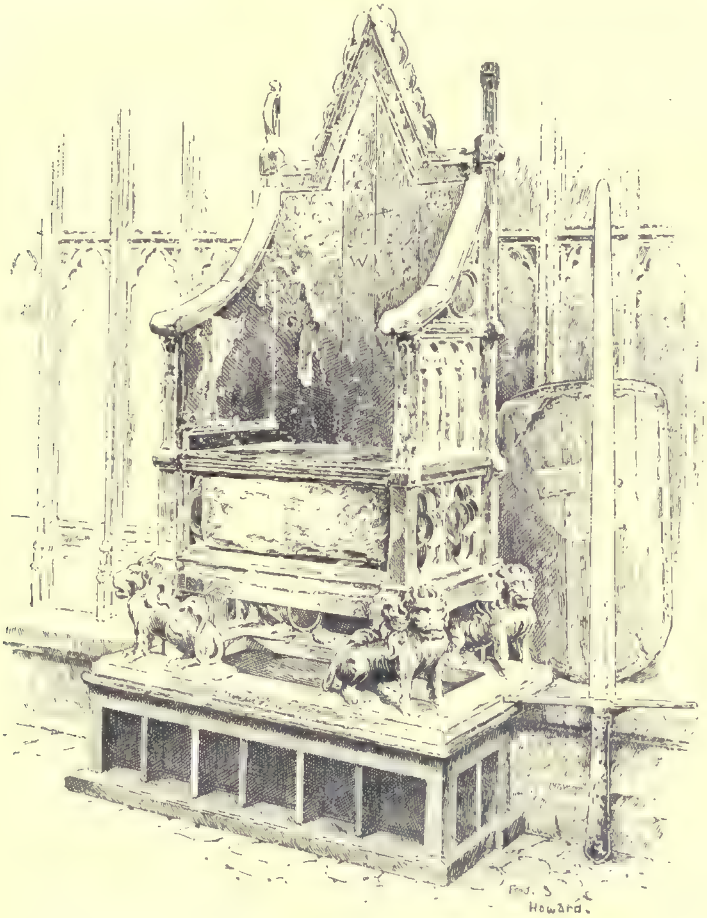
While proceedings were pending against Balliol for the resistance which he had at length displayed, Philip of France seized upon the province of Guienne, and war was declared between France and England. Edward now summoned Balliol and the chiefs of the Scottish nobility to render him assistance against his enemies, and to attend him with their armed vassals. But the insolent and overbearing policy which he had lately exhibited had roused the national pride of the Scots. They paid no regard to his summons, and, instead of arming their vassals in his service, they assembled a Parliament at Scone. The Parliament commenced its proceedings by dismissing all Englishmen from the Scottish court; and being thus relieved from the presence of spies on their measures, they determined to declare war against Edward, and to enter into negotiations with the French king, which resulted in a treaty of alliance. The English barons who held estates in Scotland were banished from their lands, and the few Scottish nobles who still remained faithful to Edward were proceeded against in the same manner. Among these was Robert Bruce, Lord of Annandale, whose broad lands were thus temporarily lost to him, and were given to John Comyn, Earl of Buchan.

Such proceedings as these excited the indignation of Edward, who sought for the instrument through whom he might counteract their tendencies. Such an instrument appeared in the younger Bruce, son of the competitor for the crown, to whom Edward now showed great favour, regretting his decision in favour of Balliol, and expressing his determination to place Bruce on the throne. In consequence of these promises, Bruce and his son, with other nobles of their party, renewed the oath of homage to the English king. The weak and vacillating character of Balliol was clearly displayed at this critical moment. He made little or no attempt to quell the rising storm; and the dominant party in the Scottish Parliament, fearing a submission on his part, excluded him from the functions of government, and placed the management of affairs in the hands of twelve of the leading nobles. The council began the exercise of authority with bold and patriotic measures. They formally threw off their allegiance to Edward, concluded a treaty of marriage between the eldest son of Balliol and the niece of Philip of France, and finally assembled an army, with which they marched against Carlisle, and ravaged Cumberland with great cruelty. The attack upon that city proved unsuccessful, and the Scottish army was split up into factions, whom the bond of a common love for liberty with difficulty held together.

Edward had now prepared himself for the signal vengeance which he meditated. He collected an army of 30,000 foot and 4,000 horse, and was presently joined by 1,000 foot and 500 horse under the command of Anthony Beck, Bishop of Durham. This warlike prelate rode beside the king at the head of the troops, and with the sacred standards of St. John of Beverley and St. Cuthbert of Durham elevated above them, they marched towards Scotland. Balliol had been already summoned to attend at Newcastle as vassal of the English crown. Edward waited a few days for his appearance, and then crossed the Tweed, and led his army along the Scottish side to the town of Berwick, which was then in the hands of the Scots.

Berwick was at that time a place of great importance, celebrated for its wealth and the power of its merchants, and thus its capture offered to Edward other temptations than the prospect of revenge. He, however, made some show of clemency by proposing terms of accommodation. These being refused, a simultaneous attack was made upon the town by the English fleet and the troops of the king. The attack by sea was repulsed, with the loss of three ships, which were burnt by the townspeople; but the onslaught of the land forces bore down all opposition. Berwick possessed a castle of great strength, but the town itself was defended only by a dike. Over this outwork Edward led his troops in person, and, mounted on his war-horse, was the first to enter the town. The example stimulated the courage of his soldiery, and within a short time the town was in their hands.

The scene that ensued was characterised by deeds of horror which are a deep reproach to the manhood of the age, and an indelible stain upon the manhood of him who directed them. Seventeen thousand persons were put to the sword, without distinction of age or sex. The young and the innocent, the aged and the helpless, were mingled in the same slaughter with the strong man who resisted to the death. For two days the carnage was continued, until the dead were piled up before the doors of the houses, and the streets ran with blood. From the cruelty of man the wretched inhabitants sought the protection of God, and, flocking to the churches, they flung themselves in terror before the altars. But the sanctuary was speedily violated by their enemies; the shelter of the sacred walls availed them nothing, and they were cut down by hundreds where they knelt. It is related that a party of Flemish merchants defended themselves in their factory—a building of great strength—against the whole English army, until the assailants, exasperated by the opposition they encountered, set fire to the factory, and burnt it, with its brave defenders, to the ground.


Fred. S. Howard.

THE CORONATION CHAIR AND "STONE OF DESTINY," WESTMINSTER ABBEY. *(See p. 342.)*

Such was the terrible lesson which Edward was capable of giving to those who opposed him. The massacre of Berwick took place on Good Friday, the 30th of March, 1296, and on the 5th of April the Abbot of Arbroath arrived at the town, attended by three monks. Undismayed by the ruthless character of the king, the abbot appeared before him, and delivered to him Balliol's formal renunciation of his homage. "What! is the traitor capable of such madness?" the king exclaimed. "If, then, he will not come to us, we will go to him."

The castle of Dunbar was one of the strongest and most important fortresses of Scotland. Patrick, Earl of Dunbar, was at this time fighting against his countrymen in the English army; but his countess, who held the castle, and whose hatred of the English was intense, entered into a treaty with the Scottish leaders to deliver it up to them. The offer was speedily taken advantage of, and the Earls of Ross, Atholl, and Monteith, with other powerful chiefs, and a body of thirty-one knights, and a number of foot, took possession of the castle. Having driven out the few soldiers who refused to join their standard, they prepared to maintain, at all hazards, the strong position which they had obtained.

Aware of the importance of this movement, Edward dispatched Earl Warrenne with 10,000 foot and 1,000 horse, to recover the castle. When the earl summoned the garrison to surrender, they agreed to do so, provided they were not relieved within three days. Meanwhile, the whole Scottish army was advancing upon the English, and having reached the high ground above Dunbar, took up a strong position there. Forty thousand foot and 1,500 horse were ranged in formidable array upon the hills, and the garrison of the castle jeered and insulted the English from the walls, as though they were already beaten. The relative positions and numbers of the two armies were such that nothing but the headlong precipitancy of the Scots could have lost them the victory. Undismayed by the number of the enemy, Earl Warrenne advanced to meet them, and while passing through a narrow valley his troops fell for a short time into confusion. The Scots perceived this, and believing that the English were taking to flight, they abandoned their position, and rushed down upon their foes with shouts of triumph. Meanwhile the English leader had restored order among his troops, and the Scots found themselves, not among masses of fugitives, but face to face with a compact body of tried and well-appointed soldiers. They were driven back in the utmost disorder, and the earl gained a complete victory, which for a time decided the fate of Scotland. Ten thousand men were left dead on the field, and the greater number of the leaders were taken prisoners. This battle was fought on the 28th of April, and on the following day King Edward appeared on the scene in person, and the castle then surrendered.

Edward proceeded with his customary energy to complete the subjugation of the kingdom. He passed through the country, and took possession of the castles of Roxburgh, Dumbarton, and Jedburgh. Having received reinforcements, he advanced to Edinburgh, which fortress surrendered to him after a siege of eight days. At Stirling he was joined by the Earl of Ulster, with 30,000 men, and passed on to Perth, where for a few days he sheathed the sword and occupied himself with the ceremonies of religion. While the English army were keeping the feast of John the Baptist, new messengers arrived from Balliol, who now sued for peace. Edward would not condescend to treat with the fallen monarch in person, but sent to him the Bishop of Durham, who communicated to him the pleasure of the English king. The terms offered were such as never ought to have been accepted. Balliol was required to submit himself absolutely to the mercy of the conqueror, and to renounce his kingly state under circumstances of the utmost humiliation. In the presence of an assembly of bishops and nobles the King of Scotland was stripped of crown and sceptre, and was compelled, with a white rod in his hand, to perform a feudal penance. The date of this disgraceful transaction was the 7th of July, 1296. Balliol placed his son Edward in the king's hands as a hostage, and the youth, with his father, was sent to England, where both remained for three years imprisoned in the Tower.

Edward continued his victorious course through Scotland, encountering no opposition. From Perth he proceeded by way of Aberdeen to Elgin. On his return to Berwick he visited the ancient abbey of Scone, and removed from it the "famous and fatal stone" upon which for ages past the Scottish kings had been crowned. This stone, with the regalia of Scotland, was placed by Edward in Westminster Abbey, as a memorial of the conquest of Scotland. Within a year that conquest had been entirely wrested from him; but the stone still remains at Westminster, little worn by the lapse of six centuries.

After the battle of Dunbar, the elder Bruce reminded Edward of his promise to place him on the Scottish throne. The king—who fulfilled his promises only when it suited him—replied angrily, "Have I nothing to do but to conquer kingdoms for thee?" Instead of placing

Bruce on the throne, Edward directed him, with his son, the younger Bruce, to receive to the king's peace the inhabitants of his own estate of Carrick and Annandale. Such was the degrading office in which the young Robert Bruce, the future restorer of his country's freedom, was at this time employed.

Edward now occupied himself in a settlement of the affairs of the kingdom; and the measures which he took for that purpose were in themselves politic and just. The forfeited estates of the clergy were restored, many of the civil functionaries of Balliol were retained in office, and the governors of districts in most cases were permitted to exercise authority as before. Some Englishmen were, however, placed in command of castles and districts to the south, and the supreme authority was vested in three persons—John of Warrenne, Earl of Surrey, governor; Hugh de Cressingham, treasurer; and William Ormsby, justiciary.

The independence of Scotland now appeared to be completely destroyed, the great nobles were reduced to a state of submission, if not of servility, and the power of the King of England was firmly rooted throughout the country. But a change was at hand, and the slumbering fires of patriotism were soon to be kindled into a blaze. The man who was destined to rouse his countrymen from their apathy, and work out the freedom of his native land, was at this time engaged in roaming the hills of Renfrewshire at the head of a petty band of marauders. He was that Sir William Wallace, famed through succeeding ages in song and story but of whom history can offer few details worthy of reliance. The family of Wallace was ancient, and might be termed gentle, but was neither rich nor noble. He was the son of Sir Malcolm Wallace, of Elderslie, in Renfrewshire. In those stormy times bodily strength and valour in the field were the first qualities necessary to success. The strength of Wallace is described as having been prodigious. His size was gigantic, and as he grew towards manhood there were few men who could meet him in single combat. He was a man of violent passions, and a strong hatred of the English, which was evinced by him in early life, was fostered by those with whom he came in contact.

So the Scots took up arms once more. The great chiefs, indeed, hung back from the movement, and maintained their condition of supineness and inactivity, but the inferior nobility and the people no longer suffered themselves to be restrained. Incited by their hatred of the English, the peasants formed themselves into armed bands, which infested the highways, and attacked any of their enemies whom they could surprise in detached parties. Edward devoted large sums of money to repressing these disorders, but without success; and now there appeared on the scene the extraordinary individual whose energies, first excited by personal injuries, were afterwards devoted to his country, with efforts not less than heroic.

We first read of Wallace as engaged in a quarrel in the town of Lanark with some English officers who had insulted him. Bloodshed ensued, and he would probably have lost his life in the streets but for the interference of his mistress, to whose house he fled, and with whose assistance he escaped It is stated that Hislop, the English sheriff, attacked the house, and, in a spirit of brutal and unmanly vengeance, seized the unhappy lady, and put her to death. Wallace, having heard the news, threw himself upon the sheriff, and slew him. For this deed he was proclaimed a traitor, and he left his home to seek a retreat among the mountain fastnesses. Here he was soon joined by a few desperate men, who naturally acknowledged the strongest as their chief, and then, under his guidance, made successful attacks upon straggling parties of English. His name soon became famous, and numbers of men of different classes flocked to his standard. The halo of romance with which this hero was speedily invested by the people, the continued and galling acts of tyranny on the part of the English, and the desire of revenge, all tended to recruit the ranks of the mountain chieftain. Among the first men of note who joined him was Sir William Douglas, the former commander of the garrison of Berwick, who, at the sack of that town, had been permitted to march out with military honours. He now brought a force consisting of the whole of his vassals to the army of Wallace. At this time Ormsby, the justiciary, was holding court at Scone. Thither Wallace led his troops, and surprised the justiciary, who escaped with difficulty, leaving a rich booty behind him.

The Scots now openly ravaged the country, plundering and slaying all the English who fell into their power. Wallace was cruel and merciless in war, and through the records of that time we look in vain for any of those acts of humanity which were inculcated by the laws of chivalry, and occasionally practised by men who sought the reputation of accomplished knights. The same ruthless barbarity characterised the mode of warfare on both sides, and Scots or English, in passing through the country, marked their course by a trail of blood.

The conduct of the younger Bruce, who afterwards displayed, as Robert I., such distinguished abilities, was at this time uncertain, and the reverse of energetic. Edward, however, dreaded the rebellion of a chief who possessed such great estates and influence, and, having summoned him to Carlisle, compelled him to make oath, on the sword of Thomas Becket, that he would continue faithful. As a proof of his fidelity, he was required to ravage the lands of Sir William Douglas, whose wife and children he seized and carried into Annandale. Having thus quelled suspicion, the young chief, who was then twenty-two years old, called together his father's vassals, spoke of his recent oath as having been extorted by force, and as being therefore of no weight, and urged them to follow him against the oppressors of their country. They refused to do so in the absence of his father, and Bruce then collected his own retainers, and proceeded to join Wallace.

The news of the rising of the Scots was brought to Edward as he was about to embark for Flanders. He immediately issued orders for the collecting of an army, which was placed under the command of Sir Henry Percy and Sir Robert Clifford. These distinguished commanders advanced, at the head of 40,000 men, to meet the forces of the patriots, which were already in a condition of disorganisation. The Scots were without any acknowledged leader, and although Wallace, as the prime mover of the revolt, as well as by his superior qualities, was the most worthy to assume

THE ABBOT OF ARBROATH BEFORE KING EDWARD. (*See p.* 342.)

that position, the higher nobility who were with him refused to act under the orders of a man whom they regarded as their inferior. Under such circumstances as these, combined movements were impossible, and all the advantages of discipline, which, equally with prudence, may be said to be the better part of valour, were on the side of the enemy. The English leaders proposed to negotiate, and after a short deliberation, the chief associates of Wallace laid down their arms, and once more gave in their submission to Edward. Among those who did so were Bruce, Sir William Douglas the Steward of Scotland, the Bishop of Glasgow, Sir Alexander Lindsay, and Sir Richard Lundin. The document signed by them is dated at Irvine, on the 9th of July. One man alone, of all the higher Scottish nobility, remained to uphold the honour of his order, and preserved his duty to his country. This was Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell. Undaunted by the disaffection of his powerful companions, Wallace still held together a strong band of men, who, poorer and more patriotic, disapproved of the pusillanimity of their chiefs; and with these he retreated for a time into the mountains.

Several months elapsed, during which Edward appears to have made no attempt to molest the Scottish insurgents. Meanwhile the fame of Wallace was extended throughout the country, and vast numbers of the people flocked to his standard. Knighton, an old English historian, asserts that the whole of the lower orders already regarded Wallace as the future deliverer of their country, and that amidst the surrounding dangers they gathered new hope and courage from his undaunted brow. It is stated also that many of the nobility repented of oaths weakly or unwillingly taken, and that their hearts were with the cause of the man whom they had refused to obey. Wallace renewed offensive operations with largely increased forces, and drove the English from the castles of Brechin, Forfar, Montrose, and other fortresses to the north of the Forth. He was engaged in a siege of the castle of Dundee when he received news of the advance of the English. Raising the siege, he marched his forces, consisting

THE ABBEY CRAIG AND WALLACE MONUMENT, NEAR STIRLING, WITH THE OCHIL HILLS.
(From a Photograph by Messrs. G. W. Wilson and Co., Aberdeen.)

of 40,000 men, in haste to Stirling, where he arrived before the English army. Wallace took up a favourable position on the banks of the Forth, a portion of his troops being concealed by the hills. The Earl of Surrey, in command of 50,000 foot and 1,000 horse, soon afterwards appeared on the other side of the river. On observing the strong position of Wallace, the earl thought it prudent to negotiate with him, and to this end sent messengers to him proposing to treat. The reply of Wallace was bold and decided. "Return," he said, "to those who sent you, and say that we are not here to waste words, but to maintain our rights, and give freedom to Scotland: let them advance, and we will meet them beard to beard."

The English were exasperated by this bold defiance, and importuned their leader to accept the challenge offered to him. Cressingham, the treasurer, a weak and hot-tempered man, joined his expostulations with the others, protesting against a delay which would increase the expenditure of the public money. The earl, though an able general, who must have perceived the danger of an attack against the position before him, was prevailed upon by such representations as these to yield his own better judgment, and lead his impatient troops to the destruction which awaited them.

Early on the morning of the 11th of September the English began their passage across the narrow wooden bridge which was the only means of communication with the opposite bank of the river. It is evident that a large force would occupy many hours in crossing the river by this means, and during that time they must lie in a great measure at the mercy of a determined enemy. Wallace did not neglect the opportunity thus afforded him. He suffered the English to transport about one-half of their forces, and then took possession of one end of the bridge, thus effectually cutting off their further advance. He then surrounded the body of the enemy who were thus separated, threw them into confusion, and gained a bloody victory. Many thousands of the English fell by the sword or perished in the water, and among the dead was the treasurer, Cressingham. This man, during his administration had made himself peculiarly obnoxious to the Scottish people, and they now revenged themselves after a barbarous fashion, by stripping the skin from the dead body of their enemy, and cutting it into small pieces to be worn as the North American Indian of a later day carried the scalp of his fallen foe.

The Earl of Surrey had not crossed the river, and as soon as he perceived that the destruction of his troops was inevitable, he caused as many of them as could be collected to occupy the castle of Stirling, and then took horse and rode at full speed to Berwick. Among the Scots the loss was comparatively small, and the only man of note who fell was the patriotic Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell. The result of this victory was no less than the restoration of the country to freedom. Wallace pushed his success without delay, and wherever he went his progress was almost without opposition. The castles of Edinburgh, Berwick, Dundee, and Roxburgh at once surrendered, and within a short time the rest of the Scottish strongholds submitted to the victor, so that there was not a fortress in the country remaining in the possession of the English king.

A few months later a famine arose in Scotland and, driven in some measure by the want of supplies, Wallace invaded England. He remained for awhile in Cumberland, and on his return an assembly of the nobility was held at the Forest Kirk, in Selkirkshire. It is generally understood to have been at this time that Wallace was invested with the title of guardian or governor of the kingdom of Scotland and commander of its army.

It is worthy of remark that the name of Balliol was retained in this instrument, and the appointment of Wallace was declared to be made with the authority of King John, whose legitimate right to the crown appears to have been universally recognised.

At this time Edward was still in Flanders, engaged in a war with Philip of France, which had followed the seizure of Guienne. A treaty of peace having been at length agreed to, Philip endeavoured to influence Edward in favour of the Scots, and to include them also in the amnesty. But the English king would listen to no such proposals. His conquest had been suddenly wrested from him, and he was intent on vengeance. He issued letters to the barons of the kingdom, commanding that the whole military force of the realm should be assembled at York on the 14th of January, 1298.

The immense army thus collected together, and numbering 100,000 foot and 4,000 horse, was placed under the Earl of Surrey, who led it as far as Berwick. On his arrival there, the earl received the king's direction not to proceed until he himself should be there to take the command.

Edward landed in England in March, and again summoned the barons, with all the forces at their command, to meet him at York at the approaching feast of Pentecost. A still more numerous army than before was thus organised, and the king placed himself at its head, and marched triumphantly towards the north. Having reached Roxburgh, he proceeded thence along the coast, attended by a fleet which had been dispatched to furnish the army with supplies. During this part of his course he encountered no opposition, saw no enemy, and the few habitations which were to be found along the route had been deserted by their inhabitants.

The Scottish patriots were gathered together among the mountains, and the great and noble of the land once more ranged themselves beneath the standard of Wallace. Among them was Robert Bruce, who now finally declared himself on the side of freedom. With a cool judgment, which merited a more fortunate issue, Wallace for a time avoided coming into collision with the enemy, whose overwhelming numbers threatened to crush him in an open conflict. He hung upon the flank of the English army unseen, but close at hand, ready to take advantage of any opportunity of inflicting damage upon it. The march of Edward was not unattended with difficulties. The scanty resources of the country were wholly insufficient to afford sustenance for his troops, and the store-ships were detained and driven about by contrary winds. A quarrel also took place between the English and Welsh soldiers under his command; and the latter, to the number of 40,000, showed a disposition to desert, and go over to the Scots. "Let my enemies," said Edward, "go and join my enemies. One day I will chastise them all." Meanwhile, the ships still failed to arrive, and the scarcity of provisions seemed likely to approach a famine. Edward was about to retreat to Edinburgh, when he learned that the Scottish army was encamped not far off in the wood of Falkirk. The news is said to have been brought to the king privately by two of the Scottish nobles, the Earls of Dunbar and Angus. He immediately determined to go forth to meet the insurgents, and on that night the royal army lay in the fields. Edward himself, sleeping beside his horse, received a kick from the animal, which broke two of his ribs. The news soon spread through the camp that the king had been killed, and a state of confusion ensued which threatened the complete demoralisation of the troops. Edward, however, restored discipline among them by mounting his horse, and riding at their head, regardless of the pain he endured.

The English army began its march at dawn on the 22nd of July, 1298. Within a short time the enemy were observed to have taken up a position in a field which lay at the side of some rising ground in the neighbourhood of Falkirk. The force under the command of Wallace was greatly inferior to that opposed to him; but he had posted his troops with great judgment, and for a long time the Scottish infantry repelled the furious attacks directed against them. Not so the cavalry, of whom Wallace possessed no more than 1,000. These did not even attempt to resist the superior numbers of the enemy, but, without striking a blow, they turned and fled from the field. Cowardice is certainly not the characteristic of the race to which these men belonged, and therefore their flight can only be attributed to treason on the part of their leaders. Be the cause what it might, the loss of this division speedily decided the fate of the day, and the heroic resistance of the infantry was rendered totally unavailing. The Scots at length gave way before the repeated charges of heavy cavalry, and the victory of the king was complete. Little or no quarter seems to have been asked or given, for we are told that 15,000 Scots were left dead upon the field.

Wallace effected his escape with a remnant of his army, and fell back on Stirling. The English followed fast on his steps; but when they arrived at that place he was gone, and the town was a heap of smouldering ruins. St. Andrews and Perth were afterwards also burnt to the ground; the first by the English, and the latter by the inhabitants themselves. As the king passed through the country, he laid waste the villages and the cultivated fields with fire and sword. But the land was poor, and not all the activity of the marauding forces could procure the necessaries of life for so large a body of men. Edward was compelled to retreat, and in the month of September he quitted Scotland, having regained possession only of the southern part of the country.

For several years after the signal defeat he sustained at Falkirk we hear no more of Wallace. He resigned the office of guardian of the kingdom, and, in an assembly of the barons, William Lamberton, Bishop of St. Andrews, John Comyn the younger, John de Soulis, and Robert Bruce, Earl of Carrick, were appointed guardians in his stead. The new appointments were made, like the old, in the name of Balliol, although that dethroned monarch was then a prisoner in London. It would appear that bitter feuds of long standing were buried in the arrangement by which Bruce and Comyn consented to act together in the name of the man who had successfully rivalled both of them in the contest for the crown. The events of the after life of John Balliol may be told in a few words. In the year 1299 the Pope Boniface VIII. interceded in his behalf, and the fallen king was liberated from his confinement, and conveyed to the estate of Bailleul, in Normandy, from which his ancestors took their name. There he passed the rest of his days in retirement, scarcely remembering his former high position, and little heeding the important events which were deciding the destinies of his country. He died in the year 1314.

Meanwhile, events of some importance had been going on in England. Allusion has already been made to the heavy burdens entailed upon the English people by the repeated wars of their king. In addition to these causes of complaint, the clergy were oppressed by the officers of the crown, who seized their stores and ransacked their granaries for supplies for the king's troops. At length they applied for aid to the Pope; but the only result of the application was to make their condition still more miserable. The Pope granted them a bull, known as "Clericis laicos," directing that the Church revenues should not be devoted to secular purposes without the permission of the Holy See. Such defiance Edward could not be expected to endure. But at this time Boniface was himself in a position of difficulty, and the bull being opposed in France, he was compelled within a year to issue another, which virtually restored matters to their former position, and removed the papal protection from the goods of the Church. Acting upon the authority of the first bull, some of the English clergy refused to satisfy the demands of the king, who then took the extraordinary course of outlawing the whole body. The whole of the property of bishops, abbots, and inferior clergy was seized, insomuch that in many cases they were left without bread to eat or a bed to lie upon.

Meanwhile, the preparations for the French expedition were being pushed on. In February, 1297, Edward was engaged in collecting two armies to proceed, the one into Flanders, and the other to Guienne, when the Earl of Hereford, the constable of England, and the Earl of Norfolk, the marshal, who had been required to quit the country with their armed vassals, directly refused to obey. The king addressed the marshal, and swore by the everlasting God that he should either go or hang; and the earl repeated the oath, and swore that he would neither go nor hang. With these words the two barons quitted the royal presence together, and 1,500 knights immediately followed them. The king thus found himself deserted by his court, and he knew that at such a moment his crown, or even his life, was in imminent danger. With that ability for which he was distinguished, he occupied himself in quelling the storm. He employed all his art to conciliate the clergy, and having in some degree succeeded, he nobly threw himself upon the goodwill of the people. He mounted a platform in front of Westminster Hall, attended only by his son, the Prince of Wales, the Earl of Warwick, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, and addressed the people assembled below him. After a pathetic allusion to the dangers he was about to encounter for his subjects, and expressing a hope that, in the event of his death, they would preserve the succession to his son, the stern warrior-king shed tears before his audience; the archbishop also wept; and the people, overcome by these extraordinary demonstrations, rent the air with shouts of loyalty. The earls still refusing to obey the king, he appointed other officers in their place, and induced the nobles who were with him to make him a money grant.

Edward now appointed the Archbishop of Canterbury to the head of the council of regency, and proceeded to embark on his expedition to Flanders. At Winchester he was met by a deputation, who, in the name of the lords spiritual and temporal of England, tendered him a formal remonstrance. The nobles denied their liability to accompany the king to Flanders, in which country their fathers had never borne arms for the kings of England; and said, moreover, that their means were so reduced by the royal exactions, they could not, if they would, obey his command. They also designated the expedition as unnecessary and impolitic while affairs in Scotland remained in such a critical position. The king made no direct reply to the address, and feeling himself secure in the loyalty of the people, he left the nobles to their discontent, and set sail for Flanders.

It is necessary here to relate the circumstances which led to the expedition in question. The chief was naturally the occupation of Gascony; but there were subsidiary causes. In the year 1294 Edward had concluded a treaty of marriage between his son Edward and Philippa, the daughter of Guy, Count of Flanders. This union was opposed to the interests of the King of France, who exerted every means in his power to prevent it. Having in vain attempted to do so by a course of intrigues, Philip sent to invite the count to meet him at Corbeil, for the purpose of consulting on matters of importance. The old man, whose character was honest and unsuspicious, presented himself at the time appointed, when his person, with that of his wife, was seized by the orders of Philip, who conveyed them prisoners to Paris. This unknightly act of treachery excited general indignation throughout Europe, and the Pope having remonstrated with the king, he was obliged to set the count at liberty. Before doing so, however, he compelled him to make oath that he would abandon the alliance with England, and, in pledge of the fulfilment of the vow, Philippa was required to be sent to Paris as a hostage. These demands having been reluctantly complied with, the old Count took a

REVOLT OF THE BARONS AGAINST THE KING. (*See p.* 348.)

tender farewell of his child, who was then only twelve years old, and returned to his own dominions. An appeal which he addressed to the Pope for the recovery of his daughter was answered by a threat of excommunication against Philip; but that unscrupulous monarch retained possession of his hostage, in defiance of the thunders of the Church. It was at this time that the Count entered into a coalition which had been recently formed by Edward, and included the Emperor of Germany, the Archduke of Austria, the Duke of Brabant, and the Count of Bar.

Such were the circumstances under which Edward entered on the expedition which terminated with so little success to the English arms. He landed at Sluys in the month of August, and immediately on his arrival quarrels broke out among the sailors of the fleet, who came from different seaports, and between whom there had been long-standing feuds. Such was the extent to which these animosities were carried, that a regular engagement took place between the mariners of Yarmouth and those of the Cinque Ports, and twenty-five ships belonging to the former were burnt. It is related that, during the conflict, three of their largest ships, one of which carried the royal treasure, were taken possession of and conveyed out to sea.

While such was the condition of the British navy at this period, the land troops were occupied with similar quarrels and disorders. Among the allies of Edward there was little more unity. The cities of Flanders, rivals in wealth and power, regarded each other with a jealousy which threatened the most serious dissensions. Among the various factions were some who adhered to Philip of France, and their numbers were greatly increased when that king marched into the country at the head of an imposing force of 60,000 men. The French gained a victory over the Flemings at Furnes, and obtained possession of a number of their chief towns.

Damme had been occupied by Philip, who was compelled to retire before the English forces, and Edward then advanced into the country, making an unsuccessful attack on Bruges, and going into winter quarters at Ghent. Here the most deadly quarrels broke out between the English troops and the townspeople; and in a riot which took place in the town 700 of the English were killed. Every effort was made by the king and Count Guy to repress these tumults; but the feud continued without abatement, and effectually prevented any combined movements against the enemy.

Such was the position of affairs in the winter of 1297, when proposals for a truce having been made by Philip, they were readily accepted, and the English king returned to his own country. Edward had spent large sums of money in this expedition, which had ended in a manner wholly unworthy of his fame and his resources. But the humiliation of the king had not been confined to the non-success of his arms; he was compelled to give his assent to various reforms introduced by his barons, and to add confirmations of those charters which checked the abuse of arbitrary power. Early in the preceding year the constable of the kingdom, with the earl marshal and many other of the nobles, interposed in defence of the privileges of Parliament, and forbade the officers of the exchequer, in the names of the barons of the kingdom, to collect certain taxes which had been laid on by the king without the consent of the national representatives. The citizens of London were allied with the barons in this measure, and Edward found himself at length compelled to submit. From the city of Ghent, where he was then staying, he sent instructions to this effect to the council of regency, some of whom were known to favour the demands of Parliament; and at the same place he granted a new confirmation of the two charters, and also of an important enactment, by which it was declared that no impost should be levied without the consent of the peers spiritual and temporal, the knights burgesses, and other freemen of the realm.

Such concessions as these were not made by Edward without great reluctance, and his annoyance at the restrictions thus placed upon him was clearly shown soon after his return to England. His barons, however, were determined that the statutes should not be evaded, and a Parliament having been summoned at York, the king was called upon to give a solemn ratification of the charters he had granted. Edward excused himself at that time under the plea that he was on his way to chastise the Scots; but he gave his promise to do what was desired of him on his return, and the Bishop of Durham and three barons made oath in his name to that effect.

On his return from Scotland, Edward met his parliament, which was assembled in March, 1299, at Westminster. He now endeavoured by every means in his power to gain time, and when closely pressed, he quitted London, as it were by stealth. The barons, however, were not to be thus defeated, and having followed him, and urged the fulfilment of his solemn obligations

Edward found himself compelled to assent. By an extraordinary act of craft, however, he took measures to evade the provisions of the document by adding a clause at the end, "saving the rights of the crown," which destroyed the value of the concession, and subverted the meaning of what had gone before. The cunning of the king had, in this instance, overreached itself. With few exceptions, the barons rose up in indignation, and quitted the assembly and the city, with their retainers. Edward now proposed, as he had done before, to secure the goodwill of the people; and to this end he directed the sheriffs of London to call a meeting of the citizens, and to read to them the new confirmation of the charters. The people assembled in large numbers in St. Paul's Churchyard, and listened attentively. It appears that they possessed more intelligence than the king gave them credit for, since, after having applauded the earlier clauses, they no sooner heard the last, than they gave every demonstration of indignation, and proved that they fully comprehended its unworthy purport. The king now perceived that the country was unanimously against him; and having called his Parliament once more together, he threw out the obnoxious clause, and granted all the concessions that had been demanded. There was, in fact, no alternative, if Edward desired to maintain his position and authority. Four years later, the king sent to the reigning Pope, Clement V., to request a dispensation absolving him from the oaths he had taken, and to which he said he had been driven by a traitorous conspiracy. The Pope, however, evaded the request; and when the further solicitations of Edward failed to produce a more decided effect, he found himself compelled to respect those grants which he had made law.

Philip the Fair, who was inferior to Edward in warlike accomplishments, was his equal in craft and cruelty. After the English king quitted Flanders, in 1297, he had no opportunity of conducting further measures of importance in that country, which during the succeeding years was overrun by the French troops. In the year 1302 the Flemings rose against their oppressors, and gained a complete victory over them at Courtrai. That the "rabble of Flemings," as the French called them, should thus overcome the chivalry of France, was a disgrace not to be endured; but while the nobles were panting for a knightly vengeance, their king was planning a safer and bloodier retaliation. For some time previously Edward had determined to abandon his ally, the Count of Flanders, and to regain possession of Guienne from the King of France by treaty. The Pope was now appealed to, and he proposed an alliance of marriage between the two kings. Edward, who was now a widower, was to marry Margaret, the sister of Philip, and the Prince of Wales was to marry Isabella, the daughter of the French king. Such an alliance had already been contemplated with satisfaction by the negotiators. It is true that there were difficulties in the way. Edward had sworn solemnly to marry his son to Philippa, daughter of the Count of Flanders; he had also pledged his honour that he would never make truce with the French king without the entire concurrence of his ally. But these obstacles served only to delay the progress of the negotiations for a few months Edward broke off his solemn engagements abroad as readily as he threw aside his oaths at home; and in September, 1299, the double marriage took place, the son being contracted to Isabella by proxy at the same time that his father was married to Margaret.

A peace between France and England necessarily attended the conclusion of this alliance; and it was agreed that injuries remaining unredressed on either side should be compensated for, and that the possession of Guienne should be settled by negotiation; pending which, Philip gave several towns in Gascony to be held as security by the Pope. In these arrangements the French king entirely disregarded his alliance with the Scots; and neither in this treaty, nor at its subsequent ratification, were they in any way mentioned. On the 20th of May, 1301, the treaty was formally concluded. Edward regained possession of the province of Guienne, and, in return, he gave up the Flemings into the hands of their enraged enemies. A few months later, the French barbarously revenged themselves for their former defeat at Courtrai, by attacking the Flemish peasants of the district of Lille, and putting them to death in what was a massacre rather than a battle. A year previously, Count Guy of Flanders had fallen into the hands of Philip, by whom the noble old man was subjected to cruelty, which soon resulted in his death. He died in his prison at Compiègne at the age of eighty-one.

Having concluded peace with France, Edward immediately turned his attention to Scotland. Notwithstanding the decisive victory of Falkirk, and the apparent surrender of the cause by Wallace, the subjugation of that country was far from being effected. There still existed in every quarter a determined spirit of hostility to the

English, kept alive by the memory of the recent defeats, and not less so of the preceding triumphs. In 1300 the king made an incursion into Annandale, which he laid waste, and received the speedy submission of Galloway. The Scots, who were making zealous efforts to secure assistance from foreign courts, thought it prudent to make a truce, which was ratified in November at Dumfries, and was to continue in force till the summer of the following year. Their applications, however, to the Continental courts received but little encouragement. Philip of France, as was to be expected after so recent a pacification with the English monarch, rejected their suit. The only person who seems to have responded to their appeal was Pope Boniface VIII. He wrote a letter to Edward, entreating him to put an end to his ravages and oppressions in Scotland, and adducing a great number of historical proofs of the ancient and unquestionable independence of that kingdom—proofs with which, no doubt, the Scottish envoys had taken care to supply him. With a singular inconsistency, however, the Pope concluded his letter by asserting that Scotland was, in reality, a fief of the Holy See. This claim, never before heard of, and in utter contradiction to the whole tenor of the Papal brief, called forth the most earnest reply from Edward, who set about and constructed a catalogue of sovereign claims on Scotland, from the fabled age of Brutus, the Trojan, who, he asserted, founded the British monarchy in the days of Eli and Samuel, down to those of King Arthur, the hero of romance rather than of history; concluding with the full and absolute homage done by William of Scotland to Henry II. of England; taking care to omit all mention of the formal abolition of that deed by Richard Cœur-de-Lion, who had frankly pronounced it an extorted one, and therefore invalid. This royal epistle was seconded by a very spirited remonstrance from 104 barons, assembled by the king's command at Lincoln, who proudly maintained the temporal independence of both the kingdoms of Scotland and England of the see of Rome; declaring that they had sworn to defend the king's prerogatives, and that at no time would they permit them to be questioned.

PENNY OF EDWARD I.

GROAT OF EDWARD I.

HALFPENNY OF EDWARD I.

These, or other arguments which do not appear on the face of history, produced a very sudden revulsion in the Papal mind. Boniface soon after wrote to the Scots, exhorting them to cease their opposition to "his dearly beloved one in Christ," King Edward, and to seek forgiveness from God for their resistance to his claims. Edward, thus sanctioned, again advanced into Scotland in the summer of 1301, when he found the country laid waste before him by the politic Scots, and was obliged to take up his quarters, on the approach of winter, in Linlithgow, where he built a castle and kept his Christmas. Another truce was entered into the following spring, and the king then left John Segrave as his lieutenant in Scotland, at the head of an army of 20,000 men. Early in the year 1303, the Scots having appointed John Comyn regent of the kingdom, he, with Sir Simon Fraser, not contented with maintaining the independence of the northern parts, descended into the southern counties, which Edward imagined were wholly in his power. His general, John Segrave, marched out to repulse them; and on the morning of the 24th of February, near Roslin, he came up with them. He had divided his army into three sections: the first division, being suddenly attacked by Comyn and Sir Simon Fraser, was speedily routed and, in its flight, coming in contact with the second division, threw that also into confusion. This division however, made a stout resistance, but was eventually beaten, whereupon it fell back on the third division and communicated its disorder to it; so that the whole force was completely put to flight, and pursued with heavy loss. The English commander himself was taken prisoner, being dangerously wounded in the very first encounter. Sixteen knights and thirty esquires were found amongst the captives, including the brother and the son of the general. It is reported that the Scots were compelled to slaughter a great number of their prisoners, in order to engage with safety the successive bands that they came up with. They boasted of thus achieving three victories in one day. The *éclat* of this brilliant action turned the popular tide at once in their favour. The people everywhere came forward to assist them. The regent very soon made himself master of all the fortresses in the south, and once more the country was lost to the English.

DUNFERMLINE ABBEY AND CHURCH.

This sudden and complete prostration of all his ambitious hopes, and reversal of his victories, effectually aroused the martial king. He assembled a great army, supported by a formidable fleet; and by rapid marches, at the head of his hosts, he appeared before Roxburgh on the 21st of May, and reached Edinburgh on the 4th of June. His progress was marked by the most terrible devastation. He came upon the devoted country like a lion exasperated by wounds of the hunters. No foe could be found able to resist him, and he ravaged the open country, and laid in ruins the towns and villages, his fleet supplying his destroying forces with abundant provisions.

Having made a short pause in Edinburgh, to leave all secure there, he again advanced, with desolating speed and vengeance, through Linlithgow and Clackmannan to Perth, and thence to Aberdeen, and so on to Moray. He posted himself in the strong fortress of Lochendorb, situated on an island in the midst of a Morayshire loch; and there he remained till the autumn, employed in subduing and receiving the homage of the great Highland chiefs. "Tradition," says Tytler, "still connects the ruins of Lochendorb, after the lapse of more than five hundred years, with the name of the great English king."

On his return southward Edward met with a stout resistance from the strong castle of Brechin, defended by Sir Thomas Maule, which was only compelled to open its gates to the conqueror after the death of its valiant commander. The king took up his quarters for the winter at Dunfermline. He was careful this time not to withdraw to England, even during the inactivity of the winter, nor to trust the important charge of the kingdom's safety to any deputy. His soldiers are said to have amused themselves during this time in destroying the magnificent abbey of the Benedictines; "a building," says Matthew of Westminster, "so spacious, that three kings, with all their retinues, might have been conveniently lodged there." The remains of this noble abbey, including the parish church, still attest its original splendour; and the Scots regarded it with high veneration as the resting-place of no less than eight of their ancient kings, and five of their queens.

The last remains of the army of Scotland assembled to defend the castle of Stirling, that being the only stronghold which now remained in Scottish hands; but they were speedily dispersed by the English cavalry. Soon after this, Comyn, the regent and chief commander of the forces, came in and made his submission to the royal commissioners at Strathorde in Fifeshire; and his example was followed by all the nobility. These, with a few exceptions, as Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow, Sir John Foulis the Steward, and a few others, were allowed to retain their lives and lands subject only to such penalties and terms of banishment as the king might choose to impose. During Lent a Parliament was held at St. Andrews when Sir William Wallace, Sir Simon Fraser, and the governor of Stirling, were summoned to surrender themselves on penalty of outlawry, if failing to appear. All these persons, not even excepting Fraser, accepted the terms offered to them. The brave Sir William only refused to put himself into the power of the English king, except on a written guarantee of life and estate, signed and sealed by the monarch himself; and his caution was at once justified by the event, for the king, on hearing this, cursed Wallace and all who supported him, and set a reward of 300 marks upon his head. The great patriot had for a time escaped from the snare, and once more retreated to his hiding-places in the forest of Dunfermline.

Edward now turned his whole attention to the reduction of the castle of Stirling. This royal fortress, placed like an eagle's eyrie on its precipitous rock, was defended by one of the most stout-hearted men of Scotland, Sir William Oliphant, with the insignificant garrison of 140 men; yet, for about three months, that is, from the 22nd of April to the 20th of July, did they withstand the whole force of the English king. Edward directed all the operations against it in person, and brought a number of engines which threw immense stones and darts upon it. He sent to England to collect all kinds of missiles, which were discharged against the place; but it was not yielded till the garrison was reduced to the extremity of famine, and the building to a mass of ruins. The brave defenders were then compelled to surrender at discretion, for the ruthless conqueror would grant no other terms, and were obliged to solicit pardon and their lives on their knees—all circumstances of deep humiliation. Their lives were given them, but they were sent to the Tower of London and other dungeons. On marching out, it was found that thirteen ladies, wives and sisters of the gallant officers, had shared the perils and hardships of the siege.

Stirling reduced, there wanted only one other surrender to complete the triumph of Edward—that of Wallace, the man who has made his name and the noblest patriotism synonymous to all time. Edward made every exertion, and offered high rewards for his apprehension. One Haliburton, a soldier of the late garrison of Stirling, so far showed his unworthiness to share in the glory of the late siege as to lend himself to this base purpose. Sir William was surprised and conveyed to the castle of Dumbarton, and thence carried to London in chains as a traitor, though he had never acknowledged Edward as his sovereign, and owed him no fealty. In Stowe, the London annalist, we can still perceive the sensation which the arrival of this famous warrior as a captive created in the metropolis. Crowds were assembled to gaze on him. He was conducted on horseback to Westminster by Sir John Segrave, late governor of Scotland, by the mayor, sheriffs, and aldermen of London, accompanied by other gentlemen; and in Westminster Hall he was insulted by being crowned with laurel when placed at the bar, because he had been reported to have said that he ought to be crowned there. He was condemned as a traitor, and executed, with every circumstance of ignominy, at the Elms in West Smithfield, on the 23rd of August, 1305. To this place he was drawn at the tails of horses; and, after being hanged on the gallows, while he yet breathed his bowels were taken out and burnt before his face. His head was then struck off and his body divided into quarters, one of which was sent to be exposed at Newcastle, another at Berwick, a third at Perth, and the fourth at Aberdeen; his head being stuck on a pole on London Bridge. So much did they in that day fail to realise the everlasting infamy attendant on the unworthy

THE TRIAL OF SIR WILLIAM WALLACE.

From the picture by Daniel Maclise, R.A.

treatment of the noble ones of our race—the intrepid defenders of the liberties of their country. The barbarous policy of the English king produced the very results which he sought to prevent. The whole Scottish nation resented with inexpressible indignation the inhuman outrage perpetrated on their hero. Everywhere the people burned with fury against England, and were ready to rise at the call of another patriot.

Such a man was not long in presenting himself. Robert Bruce had not forgotten the words of fire which Wallace had addressed to him across the Carron, as he was in slow and reluctant retreat from the battle of Falkirk. He remembered how he had called upon him to come forth from crouching to the tyrant; to come forth from servile submission to a glorious independence; to remember the royalty of his birth, the dignity of his family, the genius and the energies which God and Nature had conferred upon him, and the profound responsibility which these had laid him under to his country. He recalled the majestic figure of that illustrious man as he bade him behold the glorious prize which Heaven itself had set before him, the most glorious which could possibly be awarded to man—that of ending the sufferings of his country; that of converting its groans, its tears of blood and shame, into cries of exultation, and of placing his native land on the firm basis of perfect independence.

The last spur was now given to the spirit of Bruce. The words of Wallace to him were become so many sacred commands. Wallace had declared that he himself lived only to defend the liberties of his people; and he prayed that his life might terminate when he was reduced to wear the chains of the tyrant. He had been compelled to wear them by treason, and he had perished in his greatness. No indignities, no humiliations, could pluck from him the immortality of the martyr—the beautiful halo of a nation's homage. The die was cast for Robert Bruce. The spirit of Wallace had fallen upon him; henceforth he must spurn the blandishments of the English king, and tread the same path to death or victory.

And, indeed, Bruce had much to risk as well as to aspire to. His father had remained to the last attached to the English interests. On his death, in 1304, Edward had fully invested him with all his hereditary rights, titles, and estates, both in England and Scotland. He had all that the most ambitious nobleman could desire, short of the crown itself. The host of conflicting and, for the most part, unworthy competitors for the Scottish sceptre had afforded him at least plausible ground for standing aloof and leaning towards the English power which held them in check. He had accordingly been honoured when other of the greatest men of the realm had been fined, mulcted, and punished. He had been entrusted with considerable commands; amongst others, with the important fortress of Kildrummie, in Aberdeenshire. But now things were come to such a pitch between the English king and his country that there could be no longer any wavering in the bosom of a true man. Edward appeared resolved to reduce Scotland to the condition of a conquered province. If he set up a nominal king in place of Balliol, it would be Comyn, whom he regarded as a traitor. It was time to reveal himself as his country's champion.

Edward having once more finished his work ot subjugation, and all Scotland lying prostrate at his feet, he now set to work about the serious task of so modelling the government and administration of the country that it should most completely remain in his grasp as a permanent portion of the realm. For this purpose he appointed a council, so-called, of the Scottish nation. This was to consist of two bishops, two abbots, two earls, two barons, and two representatives of the boroughs, who were to assemble in London, and to sit in conjunction with twenty commissioners of the English Parliament, to frame a constitution for the conquered territory. But this council, as was intended, carried things with a high hand against the people of Scotland. It cleared away all the Scottish laws and customs at a sweep, and substituted English ones in their stead. It destroyed all ancient monuments which perpetuated the spirit of nationality. Whatever histories or records had escaped the former search of the king were now ruthlessly destroyed; and the work of utterly rooting out the Scottish name and institutions was going on, when the whole was suddenly brought to a stand by a fresh and more determined insurrection.

The resolve of Bruce to throw off all disguise and declare himself openly for his country had been accelerated by the treason of Comyn, and six months had scarcely passed over the bloody relics of Wallace when the Scots were up in arms again, round the champion he had himself invoked to assume that post. In June, 1305—two months before the execution of Wallace—it appears that Bruce had made a secret compact with William de Lamberton, the Bishop of St. Andrews, of mutual

WALLACE ON HIS WAY TO WESTMINSTER HALL. (*See p.* 354.)

aid and support. This contract, still preserved in the "Annals" of Lord Hailes, had for its ultimate object the claims of Bruce on the crown. Comyn had come by some means to the knowledge of this league; had pretended to join in it; but had betrayed it to the king. Bruce was marked for due vengeance by Edward, who only waited for an opportunity also to seize his three brothers, resident in Scotland. But through the friendship of the Earl of Gloucester, the son-in-law of the king, Bruce was apprised of his danger, the earl sending him a pair of gilt spurs, and twelve silver pennies, under pretence that he had borrowed them of him. Bruce caught the meaning of the device, and resolved to escape at once. To this purpose, tradition says, he had his horse shod backwards so as to deceive those who might attempt to trace his route, for the ground was then covered with snow. Bruce arrived safely in a few days at his castle of Lochmaben, in Annandale, the chief seat of his family; and here he found, fortunately, a great number of the Scottish nobility assembled, and in the midst of them no other than John Comyn, his professed friend, but treacherous, secret foe. If he had wanted any evidences of the perfidy of this man, he had them now in his pocket; for on the way from town he had met a courier bearing letters from Comyn to King Edward, urging the absolute necessity of Bruce's instant death or imprisonment. This man he slew, on the principle "that dead men tell no tales, and carry no messages"; and the fatal secret now in his possession presents us with a certain clue to the motive of a much more startling act which he perpetrated soon after.

CAPTURE OF BRUCE'S WIFE AND DAUGHTER AT TAIN. *(See p. 358.)*

These legends were probably invented to clear the fair fame of Bruce. All that is certainly known is that the two men met at Dumfries, that Bruce demanded a conference, and that he followed Comyn, after the party had gone, into the cloisters of the Minorites, and ran him through the body. Hurrying from the convent, he cried "To horse!" and Sir Roger Kirkpatrick, one of his attendants, seeing him greatly agitated, demanded whether the traitor was slain. "I doubt so," replied Bruce. "You doubt!" exclaimed Kirkpatrick; "I will make sure;" and so saying, he rushed into the monastery, stabbed the Comyn to the heart, and killed also his kinsman, Sir Robert Comyn, who strove to defend him. From this circumstance the Kirkpatrick family adopted the crest of a bloody hand holding a dagger, and the motto, "I mak sicker" ("I make sure").

The die was now cast. There was no retreat, no reconciliation after that terrible deed. Bruce called his staunchest friends hastily around him; they were few, but devoted spirits. The Bishops of St. Andrews and Glasgow, the Abbot of Scone, the four brothers of Bruce, his nephew, Thomas Randolph, his brother-in-law Christopher Seton, and some ten or twelve young men, gathered at the call. Bruce flew in various directions, exciting his countrymen to arms. He attacked and defeated the English, took some of their forts, and drove them from the open country.

Edward, on receiving this news, at once prepared to take signal vengeance on the insurgents, and this time to give the nation such a castigation as should effectually quell its spirit. Not waiting for his own slower movements, he sent on Aylmer de Valence, the Earl of Pembroke, with a small army, to check the spread of the disaffection. He met with Bruce near Methven, in Perthshire, on the 19th of June, and, surprising the Scottish forces, put them utterly to the rout. Bruce was three times unhorsed in the battle, and escaped with the greatest danger. His friends the Earl of Athol, Simon Fraser, and Sir Christopher Seton, were taken prisoners and executed. Amongst the prisoners was also his nephew Randolph. His wife and his daughter Marjory, having left the fortress of Kildrummie, were seized by the Earl of Ross in the sanctuary of St. Duthac at Tain; the knights who attended them were put to death, and they themselves were sent to England, where they remained prisoners eight years. His brother Nigel, much beloved by the people, was compelled to surrender Kildrummie, and was also hanged and afterwards beheaded at Berwick, with many other knights and gentlemen. He himself with great difficulty made his escape into the mountains of Athol, with about five hundred followers, the sole remnant of the army with which he had hoped to redeem Scotland. For many months he and this little band wandered amongst the hills in the utmost wretchedness, destitute of shelter, and often of food. A price was set upon their heads; their enemies, the Comyns, infuriated by the slaughter of their chief, and now in the ascendant as allies of England, pursued them with vindictive rage, driving them farther and farther into the labyrinth of the hills. On reaching the borders of Argyll, they encountered the Lord of Lorn, who had married an aunt of the Comyn, at the head of 1,000 men who occupied a narrow defile. A desperate conflict took place, and Bruce and his followers narrowly escaped extermination. Finally, Bruce found means to pass over to Carrick.

Whatever was the momentary despondency and misery of Bruce, he issued forth early in the spring of 1307, in order to make one more effort for the expulsion of the English. His followers amounted only to 300; and he was nearly betrayed by the unexplained lighting of a fire upon a hill, the very signal which he had agreed upon if it were safe to approach. As he drew near the landing-place, he was met by the information that the English were in full possession of Carrick, and Lord Percy, with a strong garrison, held Turnberry Castle. Bruce was thunderstruck at the intelligence; but making a sudden attack on a party of English that lay close at hand, he created a momentary panic, and, under advantage of that, made good his retreat into the mountains. The war became desultory and undecided; and two of Bruce's brothers, Thomas and Alexander, as they were bringing over a band of Irish adventurers to his assistance, were taken prisoners by Duncan M'Dowal, a chief of Galloway, and being conducted to King Edward, were instantly ordered for execution.

Fortune still continued to pursue Bruce. He could only preserve himself by hiding in the hills and wastes of Galloway, till, on the 10th of May, he succeeded at Loudon Hill in completely defeating the Earl of Pembroke. Three days after, he again defeated the English under the Earl of Gloucester, and pursuing them to the castle of Ayr there besieged them.

Meantime, Edward had been advancing by slow marches northward. Though it is not distinctly stated by the historians, there is little doubt that his health was giving way when he first received at Winchester the news of the Scottish rising. He had immediately sent off the Earl of Pembroke, and prepared to follow himself. He knighted his son, the Prince of Wales, with great ceremony, preparatory to his taking part in the expedition, who, in turn, knighted, on the 22nd of May, 270 young men of noble family. At the feast given on this occasion, in the Palace of Westminster, Edward made a solemn vow to God to avenge the death of Comyn, and punish the insurgent Scots; and at this time he conjured his son, and the whole company, in the event of his death, to keep his body unburied until this vow was accomplished. Thus he had the probability of death in his thoughts at the outset of this expedition, and he advanced in it with the tardiness of a sick man. It was the commencement of July when he arrived at Carlisle, where the news of Bruce's fresh successes, and the defeat and close besiegement of his generals, had the effect of rousing his irritable temperament to a desperate effort. He threw aside the litter in which he had hitherto travelled, mounted his horse, and having reached, on the 7th of July, the village of Burgh-by-Sands, he sank completely exhausted, with his latest breath, and with a tenacity of purpose characteristic of the man, enjoining his successor, through the ministers who surrounded him, never to cease his efforts till he had thoroughly subjugated Scotland.

Thus terminated the remarkable career of this truly great man, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his reign. Since the days of Richard I. there had been no martial monarch of equal bravery and ability; since those of Henry II. none who had the same genius for civil administration and the framing of laws and institutions which gave not only a character to his own times, but to the ages which came after him. Hume does not hesitate to assert that "the enterprises of this prince, and the projects which he formed and brought near to a conclusion, were more prudent, more regularly conducted, and more advantageous to the solid interests of his kingdom, than those which were undertaken in any reign, either of his ancestors or successors." However we may be disposed to modify this praise in regard to what Edward actually carried out, there can be no question that his perception of the vast advantages which would result to every part of the island from its consolidation into one kingdom was evidence of a great and comprehensive genius; and the ardour, based on an indomitable spirit of perseverance, with which he pursued that great end, is equal evidence of a mind, not only of the clearest acumen, but of the loftiest qualities of human nature. He succeeded in winning to the English nation, and amalgamating with it for ever, the principality of Wales; and if he failed in effecting the annexation of Scotland, it was only through being actuated more by the military spirit of the times than by those moral and political influences which later generations have discovered to be the most effectual. It was beyond the intellectual horizon of the age to aim at the union of the kingdoms by the careful demonstration of the greater mutual advantages, and of the infinitely expanded capabilities of glory and power to Britain as a whole, which were applied successfully four centuries afterwards.

By seeking to accomplish the union of England and Scotland by the forces most familiar to the spirit of that era—that is, by the power of arms and numerical ascendency—his scheme, grand and beneficent in itself, necessarily failed. The plan was premature; it existed in the nature of things, but it lacked that philosophical regard to national character and feeling, and that tone of mutual forbearance, which it required centuries yet to ripen. The rude idea of bearing down a brave and high-spirited people by armed power and arbitrary will could not but irritate those on whom the attempt was made; and it then became a question of moral forces, and of the natural defences of the country, whether it should succeed. It succeeded in Wales, though after a brave resistance, because there was no proportion between the extent and the physical resources of the two countries. It failed in Scotland, because the areas of the two contending kingdoms, though greatly unequal, were yet more approximate; and because the martial qualities and spirit of proud independence had been long fostered in Scotland by the arduous contests of different clans and parties. The Scots were a hardy and an heroically brave people, with their magnificent mountains at their back; and, in their struggles with the ponderous power of England, discovered an invincible vigour, not only of resistance, but of resilience. Though hurled violently to the earth time after time, they rose, Antæus-like, as if with augmented strength and freshness. While the two nations, therefore, heated by contest and the savage warfare of that age, learned to hate one another with a vigorous and long-continuing hatred, they learned also to know each other's strength, and inwardly to respect it. Therefore, after the battle of Bannockburn, English dreams of the subjugation of Scotland began to wane, and though there still were many bloody wars between the two nations, there ceased to exist on each side the hope of conquest by mere force of arms.

In these conflicts, good as well as evil was elicited, and the bravery and spirit of dominion which distinguish united Great Britain no doubt draw a large amount of their life from the mutual struggles and rivalries of the two peoples. In the very attempts, therefore, of Edward to add Scotland to the kingdom by force, as he did Wales, he may be said to have laid the foundation of much of the common greatness of the nation; but from incidental causes arising out of his military attempts, both in Scotland and France, and still more from his directly constructive talent and wisdom, we owe to him much which we are apt to lose sight of in the blaze of his wars and expeditions. He was as remarkable for his sturdy maintenance of the laws as for his military ambition. Simple and frugal himself, he was ever ready to support useful enterprises. He was liberal of his treasures on such occasions. Easy and affable to his courtiers and dependents, he was yet severe in restraining licence and punishing offenders. His fine person and skill in military exercises made him popular with the people, when he did not press too heavily on them by his expensive wars; and thus, relying on his sense of justice, they were not backward in expressing their opinions, as we have seen. Though he was extremely cruel to the Jews—a feature of his character springing from the prejudices of his age—and often forgot the magnanimity of a great monarch in his resentment against those who successfully thwarted his plans, as in the case of Sir William Wallace and others, his sense of justice in his calmer moments and in his peaceful pursuits was so great, that he not only encouraged an honourable administration of the laws, but corrected and amended them, and added so many new ones, in accordance with the progress of society, that he has been termed the English Justinian. Sir Edward Coke, in his "Institutes," says that the statutes passed in his reign were so numerous and excellent that they actually deserved the name of establishments, being more constant, standing, and durable than any made from his reign to the time of that great lawyer; and Sir Matthew Hale pays him the like compliment, declaring that down to his own day they had scarcely received any addition.

Edward I. was the greatest of our mediæval lawgivers, and has been well called by Bishop Stubbs "the definer of the English constitution." Following in the steps of Henry II., he aimed at giving equal security to all, to humble the great nobles and the great churchmen, and to elevate the third estate of the realm—the commons—as a counterpoise to the other two. The spirit of his legislation can best be seen in the provisions of the most important statutes of the reign. That known as the First Statute of Westminster, passed by his first Parliament in 1275, revived and re-established the former laws and customs of the land. It is, says Bishop Stubbs, "almost a code in itself." Common right was to be done to all, without respect of persons; elections were to be free; and the provisions of the Great Charter concerning excessive fines, abuses of wardship, excessive demands for feudal aids, and so forth, were re-enacted. The Statute of Winchester, passed in 1285, was a complement to the Assize of Arms of Henry II., and, besides ordering and defining what kind of arms each class of the people should bear for the defence of the land, made admirable arrangements for the indictment and pursuit of felons and robbers, the policing of the walled towns, and the clearing of the edges of public roads to prevent them from becoming the lurking-places of highwaymen. The Statute, known, from its opening words, as that of *Quia Emptores*, passed in 1290, enacted that in all future transfers of land the tenant should hold, not from the alienor, but from his superior lord. It thus played into the hands of the king, who was the landlord *par excellence*, and established a numerous class of independent gentry, holding their estates directly from the crown. The second Statute of Westminster, called that *De donis conditionalibus*, established the power of entail, and stopped the life-tenant from alienating an estate at his will. Another important statute of the reign was that of mortmain, or *De Religiosis*, passed in 1279. This was a distinct blow at the Church, which had gained great wealth by the custom which prevailed of giving property to the Church, and receiving it back again as a tenant of the Church. It was then said to pass into a dead hand—"in mortuam manum"—and the lay over-lord was deprived of his feudal dues. This practice was now forbidden under penalty of forfeiture to the next superior lord, and if he failed to insist upon his right within a year, the right passed to *his* over-lord, and so on to the king.

Edward's chief title, however, to the admiration and affection of posterity is that of the creator of the House of Commons. He has a formidable rival in Simon de Montfort; but it has been cogently pointed out that Simon's important Parliament of 1265, though perfect in its elements, was in reality a packed assembly, only the supporters of the existing government being summoned to attend it. It is unnecessary to say that neither Edward nor De Montfort created their assemblies at a stroke; they merely added the finishing touches to institutions which had been gradually growing to maturity, and which had their roots far back in the past. Of the machinery of the Anglo-Saxon polity, by far the most complete, and the only part that could be said to be in any sense of the word representative, was that which existed locally—the courts of the hundred and the shire. The witena-gemot was, in its latter days, at all events, a council of magnates and royal officers, and to trace any analogy or direct continuity between it and the House of Commons is misleading in the extreme. It played, however, an important part in the history of the House of Lords. William I., true to the policy of representing himself as the legitimate successor of the Confessor, made no very violent changes in the institutions of his new dominions. The witena-gemot was continued, under the name of the Great Council. Sometimes these assemblies were really national, as, for instance, in 1086 and 1116, when all landowners were summoned of whomsoever they held land; but as a rule they were composed of the great territorial nobles, both laymen and ecclesiastics. The power of these bodies, however, in the presence of such despotic monarchs as William and his sons, was little more than formal, and the convocation of such unwieldy gatherings as fully attended councils must have been, gradually became an expedient to which recourse was had on special occasions only.

SOUTH TRANSEPT, WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

By the time of Henry II. the elements of the Council had grown to be completely modified. The accepted usage of his reign was to summon the whole body of tenants holding directly from the crown (the tenants-in-chief); but except on special occasions, none but the magnates, the bishops, earls, and royal officers—"the greater barons"—were likely to attend. The Council gradually acquired organisation. We learn from Magna Charta that the "greater barons" received special summonses, addressed to them individually, while the "lesser barons" were summoned by a general writ, addressed to the sheriffs of each county. As a rule, the latter probably found that the trouble and expense of attendance were greater than their legislative zeal. This was the assembly that gave us the Great Charter, and in which during the reign of Henry III. the opposition to the royal will gained consistency and purpose under Simon de Montfort. The offshoots of the Great Council are important. The *Curia Regis*, or king's court, originally a committee of the Great Council, became first a small circle of confidential advisers, and then developed, under Henry I., into a high court of justice, with its two courts of the Exchequer and the King's Bench. The necessity of a more intimate body of ministers to advise the king upon knotty points continued, and by a process, which is exceedingly obscure, the *Royal Council*, known also as the "Perpetual" or "Ordinary" Council, was brought into being. Its chief feature was its permanence, and its importance dates from the minority of Henry III. It was in this body that the unpopular foreign advisers exercised their influence, and against which the majority of the Great Council fought. It continued to grow in importance until it developed into that powerful body, the *Privy Council*, of the era of the sovereigns of the House of Lancaster.

While the Great Council and the Royal Council were acquiring strength and authority, the idea of popular representation by means of organised estates was gradually assuming shape. The election of a few to represent the wants and aspirations of the many was by no means unknown in Anglo-Saxon times. It was, for instance, the custom of the reeve and four best men of each township to attend the county court; but there was no such body as a representative national deliberative body in existence. Parliament, in the words of Bishop Stubbs, is "the concentration of all the constituents of the shiremote in a central assembly." The Great Council contained the higher clergy and the baronage; the work was obviously to be completed by the addition of the lower clergy and the commons. Taxation was the spur which roused the nation to political life. It was felt, as the old legal maxim had it, that "what touched all should be allowed of all." The royal wants rapidly necessitated new sources of revenue, and so money was raised from personal property, or "movables." The first of these taxes was the Saladin tithe. imposed in 1188, and it soon became evident that the methods in vogue to obtain the consent of the taxed—such as the selection of a body of twelve men bound by oath, from the community of each shire to treat with the king or his representative—were slow and uncertain. Accordingly an important step was taken in 1213 when the Great Councils are found to contain other than their usual elements, one summoned to St. Albans being attended by men chosen from the towns, that to Oxford by men chosen from the shires. Again, in 1254, the sheriffs were directed to see that their several shires returned two knights, to settle what aid they were willing to give to the king; and similar instances occur during the intervening years, both sides being anxious to strengthen their case by an appeal to popular sympathy. The first instance of a combination of the representatives of the towns with those of the counties is Simon de Montfort's famous Parliament of 1265, which was attended by one hundred and seventeen dignified clergymen, twenty-three lay nobles, two men summoned from each shire through the sheriff, and two men summoned from each city and borough. It cannot, however, as we have seen, be regarded as a perfect Parliament. During the next thirty years there are many recorded instances of these immature assemblies. For instance, in 1282, there were two provincial Parliaments—one at York, and one at Northampton—in which the lower clergy and the commons were represented, but from which the lay nobility were absent. Again the gathering at Acton Burnell, held to see that David of Wales was tried, contained no clergy, and representatives only of twenty-one cities and boroughs. At last, in 1295, Edward I., surrounded by difficulties and vexations, resolved to throw himself upon the united nation. In October he issued writs for an assembly, which was a complete image of the nation, and in November it met. It was composed of ninety-seven of the greater clergy, the bishops, abbots, and priors; sixty-five earls and barons; thirty-nine judges and proctors, representing the lower clergy; and representatives of the counties, cities, and boroughs, summoned through the sheriff. It is most probable that the representatives of the shire were elected in the full county court, while the proceedings in the case of borough members seem to have been extremely various. No details exist of the earlier elections, except in the case of the city of London, and when we come to later times freedom of election had become seriously impaired through royal and aristocratic influence and the political lethargy of the citizens.

It was some time before the new deliberative body exercised all the powers which had belonged to its predecessor, the Grand Council. One of them, indeed—the judicial—it has taken care never to assume, and it was some time before the commons had any share in legislation. Summoned primarily for purposes of taxation, they at first confined themselves to that important function. In other respects the magnates were summoned, *ad tractandum*, to treat; the commons, *ad consulendum et consentiendum*, for their counsel and consent—that is, they were regarded as having inferior privileges. Nor were the elements of the Parliament at first by any means fixed. It seemed possible in the reign of Edward I. that there would be sub-estates of merchants and lawyers, as well as the three great estates of clergy, nobles, and commons; but these abnormal bodies soon ceased to have a separate existence. Nor was it clear how the line of cleavage would lie. The knights of the shire showed a disposition to coalesce with the barons, the representatives of the towns forming a second body, and the clergy a third. Eventually, however, the knights of the shire threw in their lot with the town members; the upper clergy formed a joint estate with the barons, of lords spiritual and temporal; while the lower clergy, following an unwise policy of isolation, preferred to tax themselves in convocation, and withdrew altogether from Parliament. The House of Lords, originally consisting simply of lay magnates, who received special writs of summons when their services were required, was rapidly converted into an assembly of the hereditary counsellors of the crown, whose title, created by royal patent, remained secure to them and their heirs for ever. This process took less than fifty years; and Parliaments, being summoned with regularity, became an essential feature in the constitution, and acquired a formidable defence of privilege.

All these circumstances marked the reign of Edward I. as one of the most important in our history. The organic principles which he introduced into the constitution struck deep and indestructible roots there, and have, by their permanent and progressive operation, made us in a great measure, as a nation, what we are.

Edward had a numerous family by his two wives, but a great many of his children died in their infancy. By his first wife, Eleanor of Castile, Edward, his heir and successor, was the only son, out of four, who survived him. Of eleven daughters by the same queen, four only appear to have lived. Joan was married, first to the Earl of Gloucester, and after his death to Ralph de Monthermer. Margaret married John, Duke of Brabant. Elizabeth married, first John, Count of Holland; and secondly, the Earl of Hereford. By his second wife, Margaret of France, Edward had a daughter who died in infancy, and two sons—Thomas, created Earl of Norfolk and Mareschal of England; and Edmund, made Earl of Kent by his brother, Edward II.

CHAPTER XXIX.

REIGN OF EDWARD II.

Character of the new King—Piers Gaveston—The King's Marriage—Gaveston is Dismissed to Ireland—His Return—Appointment of the Lords Ordainers—Their Reforms—Gaveston Banished—His Reappearance Rebellion of the Nobles and Death of Gaveston—Successes of Bruce in Scotland—The Battle of Bannockburn—The Establishment of Scottish Independence—Edward Bruce in Ireland—Power of Lancaster—The Despensers—They are Banished—Sudden Activity of the King—Battle of Boroughbridge—The King's Vengeance—Peace with Scotland—Conspiracies against Edward—Machinations of the Queen—She Lands in England—Edward is Deserted and taken Prisoner—Dethronement of Edward—Indignation against Isabella—Murder of Edward—The Lessons of the Reign—Abolition of the Templars.

THE transition from Edward I. to his son, Edward II., was an abrupt descent from power to weakness. The great monarch whose proud ambition it had been to embrace the whole island in his empire, to maintain his possessions in France, and to rule his kingdom by new and superior institutions, was gone, and there appeared on the throne a youth of three-and-twenty, handsome, generous, and agreeable, but destitute of any trait which implied the elements of future greatness. He was not even vigorous in the passions which carry youth out of the direct line. He had no

GREAT SEAL OF EDWARD II.

decided tendency to any dangerous vice. He was gentle, and disposed to enjoy the social advantages of his high position. The people of all classes and orders hastened to swear fealty to him, arguing, from the prestige of his parentage, and the reputation of his amiability, a fortunate reign. But the very first movements of the young king were fatal to those anticipations, and both at home and abroad brought a cloud over the brilliant visions which had attended his ascension to the throne. He was essentially weak, and all weak things seek extraneous support. The vine and the ivy cling to the tree that is near them, and the effeminate monarch inevitably seeks the fatal support of favourites. This was the rock on which Edward's fortunes instantly struck, and the mischief of which no experience could induce him to repair.

This disastrous propensity to favouritism, which early manifested itself, had excited the alarm of the stern old king, and led him to take decided measures against the evils which it threatened to produce. There was a brave Gascon knight, who had served in the army of Edward I. with high honour, and whose son, Piers Gaveston, had consequently been admitted into the establishment of the young prince. This youth was remarkably handsome and accomplished. He was possessed of singular grace of carriage and elegance of demeanour. In all the exercises of the age, both martial and social, he excelled, and was full of the sprightly sallies of wit and mirth which are so natural to the Gascon. The young prince became thoroughly fascinated by him. He was naturally disposed to strong and confidential friendship, and gave himself up to the society of this gay young courtier with all the ardour of youth. His father, quickly perceiving this extravagant prepossession, and foreseeing all its fatal consequences, had banished the favourite from the kingdom. On his death-bed he again solemnly warned him against favourites, depicting to him the certain ruin that such foolish attachments would bring upon him in the midst of powerful and jealous nobles; and forbade him, on pain of his curse, ever to recall Gaveston to England.

But no sooner was the breath out of the old king's body than the infatuated Edward forgot every solemn injunction laid upon him. The Scots were again strong in the field, and the late king had taken an oath from his son that he should never be buried till they were once more subjugated. But regardless of this, the young king, after making a feint of prosecuting the Scottish war, and marching as far as Cumnock, on the borders of Ayrshire, there halted, and retraced his steps to London without attempting anything whatever. Arriving in London, he at once buried the body of his father in Westminster Abbey, on the 27th of October.

The only thing for which he appeared impatient was the return of his favourite Gaveston, whom he had recalled the moment the sceptre fell into his hands; and the royal summons was as promptly complied with. Gaveston joined his royal patron before he returned from Scotland. The earldom of Cornwall had been conferred on him before his arrival; and the thoughtless upstart appeared in the midst of the court covered with his new honours, and disposed to show his resentment for past disdain to the most powerful men in the kingdom. Under the ascendancy of Gaveston, the king displaced all his father's old and experienced ministers. There was a revolution in the great offices of the court, as sudden as it was complete. The chancellor, the treasurer, the lords of the exchequer, the judges, and every other holder of an important post, were dismissed, and others more suited to the fancy or partiality of this favourite substituted. To his own share of honours and emoluments there appeared no limit. The earldom of Cornwall had been held by Edmund, son of Richard, King of the Romans, and was an appanage which had not only been possessed by a prince of the blood, but was amply sufficient of itself for the maintenance of one. But this seemed little to the king for the man whom he delighted to honour. He was continually lavishing gifts and riches on Gaveston. He handed to him the treasure which his father had laid up for the prosecution of the crusades; he presented him with estate after estate, many of them conferring fresh titles of distinction; and it was said that you could scarcely travel into any part of the kingdom without beholding splendid houses and parks, formerly possessed by great families, now conferred on this young favourite. Nor did the royal bounty stop here. The king gave him extensive grants of land in Guienne; and, as if he would raise him to a par with

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royalty itself, he married him to his own niece, Margaret de Clare, sister to the Earl of Gloucester, and appointed him lord chamberlain. All this did not seem to satisfy the king's desire of heaping honours and wealth upon him; and he is reported to have said that, if it were possible, he would give him the kingdom itself.

It would have been strange if the favourite, under such a rain of favour and fortune, had displayed more wisdom than his royal patron. It would have required a mind of peculiar fortitude and moderation not to have been thrown off the balance by such a rush of greatness, and Gaveston was not of that character. He was gay, vain, and volatile, and rejoiced in the opportunity of humbling and insulting all who had real claims to superiority over himself. The great and proud nobles who had surrounded the throne of Edward I. in the midst of its victorious splendour, and who had contributed by their counsels and their swords to place it above all others in Europe, naturally beheld with ill-concealed resentment this unworthy concentration of the royal grace and munificence in one so far inferior to them in birth and merit; and Gaveston, instead of endeavouring to appease that indignation, did all in his power to exasperate it by every species of ostentation and parade of his advantages. Vanity, profusion, and rapacity of fresh acquisition all united in him. He kept up the style and establishment of a prince; he treated the gravest officers of state and the possessors of the noblest names with studied insolence. He imagined that in possessing the favour of the king nothing could again shake him, and therefore he was as little solicitous to conciliate friends as he was careless to make enemies. At every joust and tournament he gloried in foiling the greatest of the English nobility and princes, and did not spare them in their defeat, but ridiculed them to his companions with jest and sarcasm. This could not last long without combining both court and kingdom for his destruction, and perhaps for his master's.

The young king was bound by the laws of feudalism to pass over to France, and do homage to Philip for his province of Guienne, and by those of chivalry, to fulfil, as early as possible, the contract of marriage with the Princess Isabella, to whom he had been long affianced. She was reputed to be the most beautiful woman of her time, and she was as high-spirited and intriguing as she was handsome. The royal couple were married on the 28th of January, 1308, with much pomp and ceremony, in the church of Our Lady of Boulogne, five kings and three queens being present on the occasion. No great affection appears to have existed on either side. Isabella could not fail to be already aware of her husband's character, and she is said to have trusted to her influence to overturn the king's favour for Gaveston, and to be able to rule him and the kingdom herself. Edward, though wedded to the loveliest woman of the age, and surrounded by every species of festivity and rejoicing, evinced, on his part, no other desire than to get back as speedily as possible to his beloved Gaveston, to whom, in his absence, he had left the management of the kingdom—a fresh indignity to his own royal kinsmen. The festive gaieties of the French court were suddenly broken off to gratify this impatient anxiety of the king to return, and the royal couple embarked for England, accompanied by a numerous retinue of French nobles, who came to attend the coronation.

Gaveston, accompanied by a great array of the English aristocracy, hastened to meet the king and queen on landing; and the scene which ensued was by no means calculated to create respect for the king, either in the mind of his young bride, or of her distinguished countrymen present. Forgetting the very presence of the queen, Edward rushed into the arms of his favourite and overwhelmed him with caresses and terms of endearment. The queen looked on with evident contempt; her kinsmen with open disgust. The nobles were filled with indignation, which Gaveston, instead of endeavouring to disarm by more modest conduct, appeared to take a particular pleasure in aggravating to the extreme. He appeared in the greatest splendour of attire, and in his equipage and retinue outshining them all. In the tournaments which succeeded the coronation he challenged, and by his indisputable vigour and address succeeded in unhorsing, the four most illustrious nobles of the land—men distinguished not only for their high rank, their great estates, and high connections, but as the successful leaders of the national armies—the Earls of Lancaster, Hereford, Pembroke, and Warrenne. This brought matters to a crisis. The anger of the whole nobility now burst forth beyond all bounds. The barons, four days after the coronation, appeared before the king with a petition, which had rather the tone of a remonstrance, and insisted that he should instantly banish Piers Gaveston. The king, hesitating, and yet alarmed, replied that he would give them an answer in Parliament.

When this Parliament met, it appeared fully armed, and with an air that menaced civil war, if its terms were not complied with. Lancaster, by far the most powerful subject in England, was the centre and head of this movement. He was first prince of the blood, possessed of immense estates, which were on the eve, by his marriage with the heiress of the Earl of Lincoln, of being increased to no less than six earldoms, including all those powers, and jurisdictions which in that age were attached to land, and made the great noble a species of king on his own estates and over a large number of influential vassals, many of them being what were called lesser barons and knights. Lancaster was turbulent, ambitious, and haughty. He had received the deadliest affronts from Gaveston which a man of his proud character could possibly receive from an upstart, and he therefore hated him with a deadly hatred. This feeling was actively encouraged by the queen, who, herself inclined to rule, and having hoped to indulge easily this passion for power through the weakness of the king, saw with keen resentment her plans disappointed by the all-engrossing influence of the favourite. The rest of the barons, gladly gathering round Lancaster, and taking courage from the favouring disposition of the queen, resolved to crush the reigning parasite. They bound themselves by an oath to expel him from the kingdom. With his Parliament in this temper, and disturbances and robberies in various parts of the kingdom — possibly fomented by the barons, or at least left unrestrained, as strengthening their cause—the king was compelled to submit to their demands; and the bishops bound Gaveston by a solemn oath never again to return to the kingdom under pain of excommunication.

The poor weak king, though he gave up his favourite for the time, still showed his folly to all the world. He endeavoured to soften the fall of Gaveston by accompanying him on his way towards the port. But instead of this port leading towards his own country, it proved to be Bristol, where it was soon discovered that he had only embarked for Ireland, over which Edward had appointed him Lord-Lieutenant, with an establishment rivalling that of a king. Not only so, but before his departure the infatuated monarch had actually bestowed fresh wealth and lands upon him both in England and Gascony. Gaveston, who really possessed much talent and learning, and might have made a distinguished and useful man had he been employed by an able monarch, who would have called out his better, and kept in check his worse, qualities, discharged his duties in Ireland as governor with vigour, repressed a rebellion there, and promoted order. But during the year he was absent his royal master was inconsolable, and never ceased labouring for his return. To this end he employed every means to conciliate the barons. He conferred on Lancaster the high office of Hereditary Steward; he flattered and promoted the Earl of Lincoln, the father-in-law of Lancaster; he heaped grants, civilities, and promises on Earl Warrenne. Having thus prepared the way, he next applied for and obtained from the Pope a dispensation for Gaveston from that oath which the barons had imposed, that he should for ever abjure the realm. With this he instantly recalled Gaveston from Ireland, and flew with joyful impatience to Chester to meet him on his way. Then, on seeing him, he rushed into his arms with every extravagance of joy. He next applied to the Parliament, which had assembled at Stamford, for a formal permission to his re-establishment in England, and, won over by the gifts and flatteries of the king, they were equally weak, and allowed him to return.

All now in the court of the imbecile monarch was rejoicing and festivity. That court was filled by every species of mimes, players, musicians, and frivolous hangers-on. Scotland was all but lost; every day Bruce and his adherents, taking advantage of the neglect of this unhappy king, were coming forth more and more openly from their hiding-places, seizing fort after fort, and even daring to make devastating inroads into the northern shires of England. In other parts of the kingdom outrages, disorder, and violence abounded; but nothing could rouse the wretched king, or withdraw his attention from the court, which was filled with revelry and feasting, and the centre and soul of which was his beloved Gaveston. The people looked on and openly expressed their contempt for the favourite. They refused to call him anything but simply "that Piers Gaveston," which incensing the foolish man induced him to prevail on the king to put forth a proclamation commanding all men to give him his title of Earl of Cornwall whensoever he was spoken of, which had only the effect of covering him with ridicule. The past experience was entirely lost on this thoughtless personage. No sooner was he freed from the consequences of his insults to the barons and courtiers than he repeated them with fresh modes of offence. He laughed at and caricatured them amongst his worthless associates. He threw his jibes and sarcasms right and left, and let them fall with the vilest nicknames on the loftiest heads. The great Earl of Lancaster was the "old hog," and the "stage-player;" the Earl of Pembroke—a tall man, of pale aspect—was "Joseph the Jew," the Earl of Gloucester was "the cuckold's bird;" and the stern Earl of Warwick "the black dog of Arden." Dearly did the vain favourite rue these galling epithets. The "black dog of Arden" swore a bitter oath that the miscreant should feel his teeth. The queen, more and more disgusted and incensed by the folly of the king, not only complained querulously to her father the King of France, but gave all encouragement to the angry nobles against the insolent Gaveston.

The riot at court had its necessary consequence—the dissipation of the royal funds and the need of more. The barons already, before voting supplies, had several times obliged the king to promise a redress of grievances. But now, on being summoned in October, 1309, three months after Gaveston's return, to meet at York, they refused, alleging fear of the all-powerful and vindictive favourite. The necessities of Edward made him imperatively renew the summons, but the barons still refused to assemble, and the object of the general odium was compelled to retire for the time. The barons then came together at Westminster in March of the following year, 1310; but they came fully armed, and Edward found himself completely in their power. They now insisted that he should sign a commission, enabling the Parliament to appoint twelve persons, who should take the name of Ordainers, having power thoroughly to reform both the government and the

PIERS GAVESTON AND THE BARONS. (*See p.* 367.)

king's household. They were to enact ordinances for this purpose, which should for ever have the force of laws, and which, in truth, involved the whole authority of the Crown and Parliament.

The committee, instead, however, of being confined to twelve, was extended to twenty-eight persons—seven bishops, eight earls, and thirteen barons. These powerful men were authorised to form associations amongst themselves and their friends to enforce the strict observance of their ordinances; and all this was said to be for the glory of God, the security of the Church, and the honour and advantage of the king and kingdom.

Thus had the imbecility of the second Edward reduced the nation to the yoke of a baronial and ecclesiastical oligarchy. This suspicious junto, however, conscious that they would be regarded with a jealous eye by the nation, voluntarily signed a declaration that they owed these concessions to the king's free grace; that they should not be drawn into a precedent, nor allowed to trench on the royal prerogative; and that the functions and power of the Ordainers should expire at Michaelmas in the year following.

The committee sat in London, and in the ensuing year, 1311, presented their ordinances to the king and Parliament. Some of these ordinances were not only constitutional, but highly requisite, and tending to the due administration of the laws. They required sheriffs to be men of substance and standing; abolished the mischievous practice of issuing privy seals for the suspension of justice; restrained the practice of purveyance, where, under pretence of the king's service, enormous rapine and abuse were carried on; prohibited the alteration and debasement of the coin; made it illegal for foreigners to farm the revenues, ordering regular payment of taxes into the exchequer; revoked all the late grants of the crown — thus aiming a direct blow at the chief favourite, on whom the crown property had been most shamefully wasted. But the main grievance to the king was the sweeping ordinance against all evil counsellors, by which not only Piers Gaveston, but the whole tribe of sycophants and parasites were removed from their offices by name, and persons more agreeable to the barons were put in their places. It was, moreover, decreed that for the

PIERS GAVESTON BEFORE THE EARL OF WARWICK. (*See p.* 370.)

future all considerable offices, not only of the law, the revenue, and the military, but of the household also—an especial and immemorial royal privilege—should be under the appointment of the baronage. Still further, the power of making war, or even of assembling his military tenants, should no longer be exercised by the king, without the consent of his nobility. This was a wholesale suppression of the prerogatives of the crown, which the barons dared not have attempted in any ordinary reign; but this would probably have little affected Edward had not Piers Gaveston been declared a public enemy, and banished from the realm, on pain of death in case of his ever daring to return.

Nothing can show more decisively that Edward was not merely weak as regarded his favourite, but was totally unfit to rule a kingdom, having no serious feeling of its rights, or desire of its prosperity, than the fact that he signed all these deeply important decrees with a secret protest against them, meaning to break them on the first opportunity; and that he sent Gaveston away to Flanders, intending as soon as possible to recall him. The moment he was freed from the demands of Parliament, he set out to the north of England, pretending a campaign against the Scots. Once at liberty, he recalled Gaveston, declared his punishment quite illegal, restored him to his honours, employments, and estates, and the two dear friends continued at Berwick, and on the Scottish borders, doing nothing to resist the advances of Bruce.

The barons now broke all measures of restraint. Provoked to exasperation by seeing the whole of their labours at once set aside, and the favourite restored to his fortune in defiance of them, they united in a most formidable conspiracy. At the head of it appeared Gaveston's old enemy Lancaster; Guy, Earl of Warwick, "the black dog of Arden," entered into the alliance, according to one historian's expression, with "a furious and precipitate passion." Humphrey Bohun, Earl of Hereford, the constable, the Earl of Pembroke, and even the Earl Warrenne, who hitherto had supported, on most occasions, the royal cause, now joined zealously in the confederacy. Winchelsey, Archbishop of Canterbury, led on the clergy, who declared themselves in a body against the king and Gaveston. Such a coalition was able, at that time, to shake the throne itself.

Lancaster, at the head of an army marched to York, whence the king precipitately retreated to Newcastle. The former made a keen pursuit, and Edward had only just time to get on board a vessel at Tynemouth, and escape to Scarborough with his minion. There Edward left him to defend the castle, while he again set out for York to endeavour to raise a body of troops. Aylmer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, whom Gaveston had ridiculed as "Joseph the Jew," laid brisk siege to the castle, which was in bad condition, and Gaveston, on the 19th of May, 1312, was obliged to capitulate. Both Pembroke and Lord Henry Percy pledged themselves that no harm should happen to him, and that he should be confined in his own castle of Wallingford. But, with all the boasts of chivalry, no great faith was to be reposed in such promises in those times, and they marched him away to the castle of Dedington, near Banbury, where Pembroke, on pretence of meeting his countess somewhere in the neighbourhood, left him under a feeble guard. Pembroke, who was under oath, having thus on plausible grounds retired, Warwick, "the black dog of Arden," who had vowed to show Gaveston his teeth, now appeared upon the scene. He made a show of attacking the castle; the garrison refused to defend it—no doubt being well informed of the part they were to play—and in the morning the unhappy favourite was ordered suddenly to dress and descend into the court. There he found himself, to his consternation, in the presence of the grim and vengeful Warwick, accompanied by a strong force. By his orders he was set on a mule and led to Warwick Castle with great triumph. His arrival there was announced by a burst of military music; great were the acclamations and triumph at seeing the long-detested favourite thus overwhelmed. A council was speedily formed, at which Lancaster, Hereford, Arundel, and other barons assisted. Some one ventured to propose gentle measures, and to shed no blood, but a voice exclaimed, "You have caught the fox; if you let him go, you will have to hunt him again." That hint decided Gaveston's fate. The certainty that the king would on the first possible occasion reinstate his favourite, and that their own lives might fall before his vengeance, determined them to put him to death, in disgraceful violation of the articles of capitulation, but in accordance with the ordinance passed by Parliament for his exile. Gaveston now stooped from his haughty insolence at the approach of death, and prayed for mercy from the Earl of Lancaster. It was useless; his enemies hurried him away on the road towards Coventry, and there, at a mile or more distant from the castle, on the 1st of July, 1312, they struck off his head on a rising ground called Blacklow Hill, where the Avon winds through a pleasant scene, suggestive of anything but such a tragedy.

The king, as was to be expected, was thrown into violent grief at the news of the bloody death of his beloved friend. He roused himself to something like energy; vowed deadly vengeance on all concerned, and proceeded to raise and march troops for the purpose. The barons stood in arms to receive him, and for the remainder of the year they maintained a hostile attitude, but fought no battle. The king's resentment, as evanescent as his better purposes, then gave way; the barons consented to solicit his pardon on their knees; and this pretended humility flattered him into compliance. The plate and jewels of Gaveston were surrendered into his hands, and he was implored to confirm their deeds by proclaiming the late favourite a traitor. Here, however, Edward stood firm; he not only refused, but declined also to confirm the ordinances they had passed. But they had accomplished the grand object of destroying the hated favourite, and therefore were the more willing not to press the king too closely on other points. All classes in the nation now began to cherish hopes that they might be led to chastise the Scots, and to win back, if possible, the brilliant conquests of Edward I.

For seven years the feeble and inglorious Edward II. had now suffered the loss of his great father's acquisitions in Scotland, and the reverses and disgraces of the English arms to remain unavenged. Occupied with the society of his favourite, the effeminate pleasures of the court, and the consequent contentions with his barons, he had allowed Bruce to proceed, with all the activity and resources of a great mind, to reassure the people of Scotland, retake the castles and forts, and strengthen himself against attack. Bruce had gradually risen from a condition the most perilous and enfeebled to one of considerable strength. His soldiers now held every stronghold except that of Stirling; and the governor of this fortress, by the permission of Bruce himself, appeared in London to inform the king that he had stipulated that if the castle were not relieved by the feast of St. John the Baptist (the 24th of June) it should be surrendered.

Thus the reign of this weak monarch was the rescue of Scotland. Had not this spiritless king interposed between two such monarchs as the First and Third Edward, it is difficult to suppose that Scotland could have maintained its independence. But, with the golden opportunity of an incompetent enemy, Providence had also sent Scotland one of the greatest men which it ever produced. Robert Bruce, driven to seek refuge in the most inaccessible wilds and mountains during the dominion of Edward I., and even pursued there by some of his own countrymen, such as the Lord of Lorn, and the relatives of the Red Comyn, no sooner saw the incapable ruler who had succeeded the "Hammer of Scotland," as Edward I. is styled on his tomb in Westminster Abbey, than he seized every favourable opportunity for regaining the castles and strongholds from the English. As fast as he mastered them he laid them in ruins, for he could not afford garrisons to defend them, and he knew that the feeling of the country was with him.

Thus at last it came to pass that the English had only the castle of Stirling left in all Scotland; and Sir Philip Mowbray, after a brave defence, had agreed to deliver that up if not relieved by a certain day. He had, as we have said, arrived in London with this message. Perhaps even such a message as this, full of national disgrace, might not have moved Edward out of his epicurean listlessness, but it aroused the nobles. They exclaimed unanimously that it would be an eternal shame thus to let the conquest of Edward I. fall out of their hands without a blow. It was therefore resolved that the king should lead an army to the rescue.

A royal summons was issued for all the military force of England to meet the king at Berwick on the 11th of June, 1314. The most warlike of the British subjects from the French provinces were called forth; troops were enlisted in Flanders; the Irish and Welsh were tempted in great numbers to Edward's standard by hopes of plunder; and altogether an army of not less than 100,000 men, including 40,000 cavalry—3,000 of whom, men and horse, were clad in complete armour—assembled. A large fleet attended to act in concert with the army; and at the head of this mighty force the king took his way towards Edinburgh, advancing along the east coast, and thence along the right bank of the Forth to Stirling.

Robert Bruce, who had been lying before Stirling awaiting the result of Sir Philip Mowbray's mission to London, now saw that the fate of the kingdom must be decided on or near that spot. His army was much inferior to the English one in numbers, amounting to between 30,000 and 40,000 men. But then they were tried troops, fighting for the very existence of their country, and under such leaders as Robert Bruce, Randolph, and Douglas—men whom they had followed into exploits almost miraculous. The English army was far better armed and provided, except in one particular, and that the most essential of all—a commander. Instead of being led by a man of courage, experience, and sagacity, they had a timid, effeminate puppet; and when so much depended on the commander-in-chief—even more than at the present day—that single circumstance was fatal.

Bruce made preparations for the decisive struggle with his usual ability. He had collected his forces in the forest called Torwood; but as he knew the superiority of the English, not merely in numbers, but in their heavy-armed cavalry (far better mounted and equipped than his own) and in their archers (the very best in the world), he determined to provide against these advantages. He therefore led his army into a plain on the south side of Stirling, called the New Park, close beneath which the English army would be obliged to pass through a swampy country broken up with water-courses, while the Scots stood on firm, dry ground. With this morass in front, and the deep, woody, and broken banks of the little rivulet of Bannockburn on his right, so rocky that no troops could pass them, he took care to secure the more assailable ground on his left by digging a great number of pits, about knee-deep, which he covered with brushwood, and over that with turf, so as to look like solid grassy ground. In these pits he is said by some writers to have fixed pointed stakes. The whole ground, says Barbour, the poetical chronicler, was like a honeycomb with the holes. Besides this, Bruce sought to disable the English cavalry by sowing the front of the battle-field with those cruel, four-pointed steel spikes called caltrops and crow-feet, which lamed and disabled the horses which trod upon them.

THE BORE-STONE, BANNOCKBURN, IN WHICH BRUCE PLANTED HIS STANDARD.

Bruce then divided his forces into four divisions. Of these he gave the command of the right wing, flanked by the Bannock burn, to his brother Edward; of the left, near Stirling, to Randolph, who was posted near the church of St. Ninians, and had orders at all risks to prevent the English from throwing succours into the city; Sir James Douglas and Walter the Steward commanded the centre; and Bruce headed the reserve in the rear, consisting of the men of Argyll, the islanders, and his own vassals of Carrick.

Douglas and Sir Robert Keith, mareschal of the Scottish army, were dispatched by King Robert to take a view of the English forces, now approaching from Falkirk. They returned saying the vast host approaching was one of the most beautiful and terrible sights imaginable; that the whole country appeared covered with moving troops; and that the number of banners, pennons, standards, flags, all of different kinds, made so gallant a show, that the bravest and most numerous army in Christendom might be alarmed to behold it coming against them. It was Sunday, and Barbour describes it as so bright that the armour of the English troops made the country seem all on fire. Never had England sent forth a more magnificent host, and never did one approach the battle-field with more imposing aspect; but the Lion-heart of the army, the terrible "Hammer of Scotland," was no longer there.

As the army drew in sight, Edward sent forward Lord Clifford with 800 horse to endeavour to gain the castle by a circuitous route, hidden by rising grounds from Bruce's left wing. They had already passed the Scottish line when Bruce was the first to descry them. "See, Randolph," he cried, riding up to him, "there is a rose fallen from your chaplet—you have suffered the enemy to pass!" Randolph made no reply, but rushed upon Clifford with little more than half his number. The English wheeled round to charge and to encompass the little band of Scots, but Randolph drew them up back to back, and they defended themselves valiantly. Douglas, who saw the perilous position of Randolph, asked to be allowed to ride up to his relief. "No," replied the king, "let Randolph redeem his own fault." But the danger became so imminent that Douglas exclaimed, "So please you, my liege, I must aid Randolph; I cannot stand idle and see him perish." He therefore rode off with a strong detachment, but seeing, as he drew near, that the English were giving way, he cried, "Halt!

BANNOCKBURN: BRUCE REVIEWING HIS TROOPS BEFORE THE BATTLE. (*See p.* 374.)

Randolph has gained the day: let us not lessen his glory by approaching the field." A noble sentiment, for Randolph and Douglas were always striving which should rise the highest in the nation.

Meanwhile the van of the English army approached the front of the Scottish host; and they beheld King Robert mounted on a small palfrey instead of his great war-horse, for he did not expect the battle that evening. He was riding up and down the ranks of his men, putting them in order, with a steel battle-axe in his hand, and a helmet on his head surmounted with a crown of gold. Some of the bravest knights of the English army rode out in front, to see what the Scots were doing; and Bruce also advanced a little before his own men to take a nearer view of them. Sir Henry Bohun, an English knight, mounted on a heavy war-horse, armed at all points, thought this an excellent opportunity to earn renown, and put an end to the war at a stroke, by killing Robert Bruce. He therefore charged furiously upon him, trusting with his lance to bear him to the ground, poorly mounted as he was. King Robert awaited him with the most profound composure; and, as he drew near, suddenly turned his pony aside, so that Bohun missed him with the point of his lance, and was in the act of being carried past him by his horse. Robert Bruce, rising in his stirrups as the knight was passing, dealt him such a blow on the head with his battle-axe that it broke to pieces his iron helmet as if it had been a nutshell, and hurled him dead to the ground. The English knights, astonished at the act, retired to the main body; and King Robert's friends blamed him for exposing himself and the safety of the army to such risks: but he himself only continued to look at his weapon, saying, "I have broken my good battle-axe."

The next morning the battle began in terrible earnest. The English, as they approached, saw the Abbot of Inchaffray walking barefoot through the Scottish ranks, and exhorting the soldiers to fight bravely for their freedom. As he passed they knelt and prayed for victory. King Edward, seeing this, cried out, "See! they kneel down; they are asking forgiveness!" "Yes," replied the bold Baron Ingelram de Umfraville; "but they ask it of God, not of us; these men will conquer or die upon the field."

The main body of the army, under the conduct of the king himself, advanced in a long, dense column upon the Scottish line; but they failed to break it by the shock, and repeated renewals of the charge told more sensibly on the assailants than on the assailed. The English were broken at every fresh collision; the Scots stood like a range of rocks. Every part of the Scottish army was brought into play, while the majority of the English never came in contact with the enemy. The brave Randolph led up the left wing to the support of the assaulted centre, till he appeared surrounded and lost in an ocean of foes. On the other hand, the Earls of Hereford and Gloucester made a fierce charge of cavalry on the right wing, commanded by Edward Bruce, but were received by those treacherous pitfalls, in which their horses were overthrown in confusion, and the riders, falling in their heavy armour, were unable to extricate themselves. Dreadful then was the slaughter; and amongst the rest Gloucester, the king's nephew, not wearing his armorial bearings, and not, therefore, being recognised, was cut to pieces in the *mêlée.*

The English archers poured their arrows thick as hail upon the main body, and might, as at Falkirk, have decided the day; but Bruce, having calculated on this, sent Sir Robert Keith, the mareschal, with a small body of horse, to take them in flank; and as the archers had no weapons for close quarters, the Scottish horsemen, dashing headlong among them, cut them down in great numbers, and threw them into total confusion.

Meanwhile Douglas and the Steward encouraged their men in the centre by their valiant deeds and the confidence in their great fame, and the battle became general along the whole Scottish line. The moment in which Bruce saw that his detachment of horse had disordered the archers, he advanced with his reserve, and the whole Scottish front pressed upon the already hesitating English. At this critical moment an event occurred which decided the victory. Bruce had posted the servants and attendants of the Scottish camp behind a hill in the rear of the army. Some writers give him credit for planning what took place, and assert that he had furnished them with banners, to represent a second army. Others, and amongst them Sir Walter Scott, attribute the appearance of these men to chance rather than design. It is supposed they saw that their army was gaining on the foe, and were therefore eager for a share of the booty. Be this as it may, suddenly the English noticed a body of men coming over the hill, ever since called the Gillies', or Servants' Hill, from this circumstance. Imagining this to be a fresh army, they at once lost heart and broke, while Bruce, raising his war-cry, rushed with new fury against the failing ranks. The king was the first to put spurs to his horse and flee. A valiant knight, Sir Giles d'Argentine, who had won great renown in Palestine, assisted the king out of the press; but he then turned saying, "It is not my custom to fly"—a keen reproof to the cowardly monarch, if he could have felt anything but fear—and dashing, with the cry of "Argentine! Argentine!" into the thickest of the Scottish ranks, was killed.

The fugitive king fled to the gates of Stirling Castle, and entreated admittance; but the brave Sir Philip Mowbray reminding him that he was pledged to surrender the castle if it were not relieved that very day, Edward was obliged to go on through the Torwood. Douglas was already pressing hotly after him; and meeting with Sir Lawrence Abernethy—a Scottish knight hitherto in the English interest, and even now on his way to the English army—he carried the not unwilling knight and his twenty horsemen along with him. Douglas and Abernethy pursued the king at full gallop, and never ceased the chase till they reached Dunbar, sixty miles off, where Edward narrowly escaped into the castle, still held by an English ally, Patrick, Earl of March. Thence the king escaped by a small fishing skiff to England, leaving a great part of his splendid army to destruction. Fifty thousand of the English were said to have been killed or taken prisoners, and the remnant of the army was pursued as far as Berwick, ninety miles distant. Of those who fell there were twenty-seven barons and bannerets, including Gloucester, a prince of the blood, 200 knights, 700 esquires, and 30,000 of inferior rank. Twenty-two barons and bannerets were taken, and sixty knights; and an English historian has asserted that if the chariots, baggage wagons, &c., that were taken, loaded with military stores and booty, had been drawn out in single line, they would have reached sixty leagues. Besides this, the ransom of so many distinguished men was a grand source of wealth to the victorious army. The losses of the Scots were comparatively trivial, Sir William Vipont and Sir William Ross being the only persons of note slain.

Such was the decisive battle of Bannockburn, which has ever since been celebrated in song and story as one of the proudest triumphs in Scottish history. It at once established the independence of Scotland. "The English," says Sir Walter Scott, "never before or afterwards, whether in France or Scotland, lost so dreadful a battle as that of Bannockburn, nor did the Scots ever gain one of the same importance." Bruce was at once elevated from the condition of an exile, hunted by his enemies with bloodhounds like a beast of the chase, and placed firmly on the throne of his native land—one of the wisest and bravest kings who ever sat there. The moral effect of this battle was almost magical. Stirling Castle was at once surrendered, according to stipulation. Bothwell Castle, in which the Earl of Hereford had shut himself up, soon after yielded to Edward Bruce, and Hereford was exchanged for the wife, sister, and daughter of the King of Scots, who had been detained eight years in England, as well as for the Bishop of Glasgow and the Earl of Mar. The triumphant Scots marched into England, ravaged Northumberland, levied tribute on Durham, wasted the country to the very gates of York, and going westward, reached Appleby in Westmoreland, whence they returned home laden with spoil. The English became thoroughly demoralised by their overthrow, and numbers fled at the approach of the merest handful of Scots. "O day of vengeance and of misfortune!" says the monk of Malmesbury; "day of disgrace and perdition! unworthy to be included in the circle of the year, which tarnished the fame of England and enriched the Scots with the plunder of the precious stuffs of our nation to the extent of £200,000"—nearly three millions of our money.

Encouraged by this panic, the Scots made fresh incursions that autumn and the following summer, but received, ultimately, some checks at Carlisle and Berwick. But, perhaps, more than from this, the security of England was purchased by the ill-fortune of Ireland; for in May, 1315, the Irish, taking also advantage of the reverses of England, invited Edward Bruce to come over, drive out the English, and become their king. Edward Bruce caught at the offer with avidity, for he was fond of battle and adventure, and ambitious of fame and power. He was brave but rash. He took over 6,000 men, and was joined by several of the Irish chiefs on landing at Carrickfergus. The Scots fought with various success, and penetrated far into Ireland. In the following spring, Edward Bruce was crowned King of Ireland in Ulster, and Robert Bruce also went over to support his claim with fresh forces, making the Scottish army about 20,000 men. For another year the two brothers continued their adventure, marching on Dublin, to which the citizens set fire, and laid waste the suburbs, so that the invaders were obliged to move on. They marched south in hope of receiving co-operation from the Irish of Munster and Connaught, but were disappointed, and involved in imminent danger from an English army of 30,000 men at Kilkenny.

The English, meantime, seized the opportunity of the absence of the King of Scots, and made fresh inroads into Scotland. This compelled his speedy return, when, in March, 1318, he made himself master of Berwick, and revenged himself on the English by again marching into their northern counties, taking the castles of Wark, Harbottle, and Mitford in Northumberland; and in a second raid in Yorkshire burning Northallerton, Boroughbridge, Scarborough, and Skipton, besides levying 1,000 marks on Ripon, and carrying off much booty. But ill-fortune soon overtook his brother Edward in Ireland, where he had left him. He engaged Sir John de Birmingham at Fagher, near Dundalk, and was left dead on the field, with 2,000 of his soldiers. The efforts of the Scots for three years to erect a kingdom in Ireland thus vanished for ever, leaving scarcely a trace. Birmingham presented the head of Edward Bruce to the King of England, who made him, in recompense, Earl of Louth.

THE AULD BRIG, STIRLING.

These reverses of the Scots excited Edward of Carnarvon to one more effort for the recovery of Scotland. He assembled a numerous force, and besieged Berwick on the 7th of September, 1319, both by sea and land. It made a vigorous resistance; and Randolph and Douglas, to create a diversion, invaded the western marches with a force of 15,000 men. They made a push for York, to secure the queen, but failed. They then committed dreadful ravages in Yorkshire, and were encountered by an undisciplined mob, led on by the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Ely. This rude assemblage they routed at Mitton, on the Swale, and slew about 4,000, chiefly peasants, but amongst them 300 churchmen with surplices over their armour; whence this battle, in allusion to so many shaven crowns in it, was called the Chapter of Mitton. Edward at length raised the siege of Berwick, and marched to intercept the Scots, but not before they had burnt and destroyed eighty-four towns and villages, and done incredible damage. On the approach of the king, they warily withdrew, and finished their successful raid by a truce for two years.

Such had been the fortune in war of the son of one of the greatest commanders that the English ever saw on the throne; such was the condition to which the weakness and cowardice of Edward II. had reduced the kingdom. The Scots insulted and harassed him on one side, the Welsh on the other; and the haughty barons, taking advantage of his fallen fortunes, sought to raise their own power on the ruins of the throne. They came forward again boldly with their ordinances, and Edward was compelled to submit to them. Lancaster was set at the head of the council, and introduced a totally new set of officers of the crown. The government offices they declared should be filled from time to time by the votes of Parliament—that is, of the barons. So far from these new rulers endeavouring to expel or humble the Scots, it was believed that Lancaster was in secret alliance with them; and this afterwards was proved to be true. Acting this traitorous part, Lancaster pretended to keep up a hostile show against the Scots, but he took care that all attempts against them should fail.

Edward was clearly totally unfit to govern a kingdom. He had not the ability to conduct the affairs of peace or war; and he was of that unhappy character of mind which never derives any benefit from experience. The misery which he had brought upon himself by his foolish fondness for Gaveston, and the destruction brought upon the favourite himself, had not the smallest effect in preventing the king from again falling into the same error. Soon after the death of Gaveston he conceived the same singular and indomitable attachment to Hugh le Despenser, or Spenser, a young man of ancient descent, and in the service of the Earl of Lancaster, who, in his change of office, had placed him about the court. This second fatal attachment involved the remainder of the reign of Edward in perpetual strife and trouble, and precipitated his terrible end.

HALFPENNY OF EDWARD II.

PENNY OF EDWARD II.

This young Despenser, the new favourite, had all the graces of person and the accomplishments which had bewitched the king in Gaveston, but he had the advantages which never belonged to the Gascon—those of birth, rank, and connection. His father was a noble of ability and experience, highly esteemed for his wisdom, bravery, and integrity through his past life. But these things availed nothing with the indignant barons, who suddenly saw the young man and his father advanced over their heads. They withdrew sullenly from court and Parliament, and sought an opportunity to make their resentment felt by both the king and his minions. This opportunity, with a monarch like Edward, could not be long wanting. He began the same reckless course of heaping honours and estates on the younger Spenser. As he had married Gaveston to his own niece, sister to the Earl of Gloucester, he now repeated the very act as nearly as circumstances would permit him, and married Spenser to the sister and one of the coheirs of the late Earl of Gloucester, who was killed at Bannockburn. He thus put him, in his wife's right, in possession of vast estates, including the county of Glamorgan, and part of the Welsh marches. The father also obtained great possessions, for, in spite of his reputation for wisdom, his sudden advancement to such large opportunity appeared to have awakened in him a boundless rapacity. The king immediately followed up these gifts by seizing, at the instigation of young Spenser, on the barony of Gower, left to John de Mowbray, on the plea that it had reverted to the crown through Mowbray's neglect of feudal usage on entering into possession. This was exactly the sort of occasion for which the barons were on the watch: the whole marches were in flame, civil war was afoot. The Earls of Lancaster and Hereford flew to arms. Audley, the two Rogers de Mortimer, Roger de Clifford, and many others, disgusted, for private reasons, with the Spensers, joined them. The lords of the marches sent a message to the king, demanding the instant banishment or imprisonment of the young favourite, threatening to renounce their allegiance and to punish the minister themselves. Scarcely waiting for an answer, they fell on the lands of both the Spensers, pillaged and wasted their estates, murdered their servants, drove away their cattle, and burned down their castles. Lancaster having joined them, with thirty-four barons and a host of vassals, this formidable force marched to St. Albans. Having bound themselves not to lay down their arms till they had driven the two Spensers from the kingdom, they sent a united demand to the king for this object. Edward assumed constitutional grounds for his objection to this demand. The two Spensers were absent—the father abroad, the son at sea; and the king declared that he was restrained by his coronation oath from violating the laws and condemning persons unheard. Timid at the head of an army, Edward was always bold in defence of his favourites. These pretences weighed little with men with arms in their hands. They marched on London, occupied the suburbs of Holborn and Clerkenwell, and, a Parliament having assembled at Westminster, these armed remonstrants delivered to it a charge against the two Spensers of usurping the royal powers, of alienating the mind of the king from his nobles, of exacting fines, and appointing ignorant judges. By menaces and violence they carried their point, obtaining a sentence of attainder and perpetual banishment against the two obnoxious courtiers. This sentence was pronounced by the barons alone, for the commons were not even consulted, and the bishops protested against so illegal a proceeding. The only evidence which these turbulent barons gave of their remembrance of the laws was in requiring from the king a deed of indemnity for their conduct; and having got this, they disbanded their army, and retired, highly delighted with their success, and in perfect security, as they imagined, to their castles.

But they had in reality been too successful. The force put upon the authority of the king was so outrageous, and it reduced all respect for it to so low an ebb, that the barons and knights in their own neighbourhoods became totally regardless of public decorum towards the royal family. Even the queen, who had always endeavoured to live on good terms with the barons, and who detested the young Spenser as cordially as they did, could not escape insult. Passing the castle of Leeds, in reality a crown property, but in the keeping of the Lord of Badlesmere, she desired to spend the night there, but admittance was refused her; and some of her attendants, insisting on their royal mistress being admitted to what might be called her own house, were forcibly repulsed and killed. The queen instantly complained, with all her quick sense of indignity, to the king; and Edward thought that now he had a splendid opportunity of vengeance on his haughty barons. He for once assumed courage, and displayed a spirit which, if it had been permanent and uniform, would have made him and kept him master of his throne and prerogatives. He assembled an army, fell on Badlesmere, took him prisoner, and inflicted severe chastisement on his followers. The insult to the queen had excited the indignation of the people against the barons, and completely justified the proceedings of the king. Thus suddenly finding himself on the high tide of public approbation, he at once declared the acts of the barons void, and contrary to the tenor of the Great Charter. He showed surprising activity in collecting forces and calling out friends in different parts of the kingdom. He recalled the two Spensers. They had only been banished in the month of August; in October they were again on English ground. The king marched down upon the quarters of the lords of the marches, who were thus suddenly taken unawares, while isolated in fancied security, and incapable of resistance. He seized and hanged twelve knights of that party. Many of the barons endeavoured to appease him by submission, but their castles were taken possession of, and their persons imprisoned.

Lancaster, alarmed for his safety, hastened northward, and now openly avowed his league with Scotland which had been so long suspected, and called on the Scots for help. This was promised him under the command of the two great champions of Scotland—Randolph, now Earl of Moray, and the Douglas. But these not arriving, Lancaster set out on his march, and was joined by the Earl of Hereford and all his forces. Their army, however, did not equal that of the king, which numbered 30,000 men.

Lancaster and Hereford posted themselves at Burton-upon-Trent, hoping to keep back the royal forces by obstructing the passage over the bridge; but in this they failed, and hastily retreated northwards, hoping daily for the arrival of the promised aid from Scotland. At Boroughbridge, on the 16th of March, 1322, they were intercepted by a force under Sir Simon Ward and Sir Andrew Harclay, who occupied the bridge and the opposite banks of the river. In fear of the pursuit of the king's army, the two barons endeavoured to force the bridge, but were stoutly repulsed; Hereford was killed, and Lancaster, who in his terror had lost all power of commanding his troops, was seized and conducted to the king.

No greater contrast could be exhibited by two commanders than was shown on this occasion by Hereford and Lancaster. Hereford, determined to force the bridge, charged on foot; but a Welshman, who had discovered that the bridge was in a very decayed state, and full of holes, had concealed himself under it, and through one of these holes he thrust a spear into the bowels of the brave earl, who fell dead on the spot. Lancaster attempted to find a ford over the river, but the archers of the enemy poured in showers of arrows upon him. Night put a stop to the battle, and in the morning he was taken. Lancaster had in his day a great reputation for piety. "He was," says Froissart, "a wise man and a holy; and he did afterwards many fine miracles on the spot where he was beheaded." Hume has painted this nobleman as violent, turbulent, and hypocritical; and attributes his reputation for piety to the monks, whom he favoured, and who were his historians. But there is nothing in his public conduct which may not assume the character of patriotism, for he fell as he had lived, in endeavouring to resist the mischievous practices of the king in regard to his favourites. He was a prince of the blood, and, by his position and the rights of the Charter, bound to support the constitution which the king was continually violating in his unbounded partiality for his minions. In conformity with his character, Lancaster, on being surrounded, retired into a chapel, and, looking on the holy cross, said, "Good Lord, I surrender myself to Thee, and put me into Thy mercy." He had no mercy to expect from Edward, who, remembering too well the indignities which his beloved Gaveston had received at the hands of the earl and his associates at his execution, now resolved to have ample revenge.

About a month after the battle, he convoked a court martial at the earl's own castle of Pontefract, where he himself presided, and where, as a traitor, having made league with Scotland against his rightful sovereign, Lancaster was condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. He was clothed in mean attire, set upon a sorry jade of a horse, with a hood upon his head, and in this manner he was led to execution on a hill near the castle, the king's officers heaping all kinds of insults upon him, and the populace, whom he had incensed by calling in the Scots, pelting him with mud, and pursuing him with outcries and curses. In his life and death Lancaster bore a striking resemblance to the Earl of Leicester, the leader of the barons in the reign of Henry III.

Besides the two leaders of this revolt, five knights and three esquires were killed in the battle, and fourteen bannerets and fourteen knights bachelors were hanged, drawn, and quartered. Amongst those who were executed were Badlesmere—who had insulted the queen,—Gifford, Barnet, Cheney, and Fleming. Many were thrown into prison, and others escaped beyond the sea. "Never," says an old writer, "did English earth at one time drink so much blood of her nobles, in so vile a manner shed as this." But not only was this vengeance taken on the persons of the insurgents: their vast estates were forfeited to the crown, and the people soon beheld, with inexpressible indignation, the greater portion of these immense demesnes seized upon by the younger Spenser, whose rapacity was insatiable. In a Parliament held at York, the attainder of the Despensers was reversed, the father was created Earl of Winchester, and both he and his son enriched by the lands of the fallen nobles. Edward was as totally uncured of his folly as ever. Harclay, for his services, received the earldom of Carlisle and a large estate, which he soon again forfeited, as well as his life, for a treasonable correspondence with the Scots. But the rest of the barons of the royal party, receiving little, were the more incensed at the immense spoils heaped on the Spensers. The king's enemies, on the other hand, vowed vengeance on both monarch and favourite, whom the people regarded with more determined envy and hatred than ever.

Thus Edward, falling the moment that he was successful into his hopeless failing of favouritism, not only lost every advantage he had so completely gained, but hastened by it the day of retribution. The nobles who had escaped to France, there set on foot a dangerous conspiracy. Amongst these was the younger Roger Mortimer, one of the most powerful barons of the Welsh marches, who had been twice condemned for high treason but, receiving a pardon for his life, was detained in the Tower, where his captivity was intended to be lifelong. Making his guards drunk with a drugged liquor, he escaped, and now joined these conspirators, all smarting from their sufferings on account of the favourite, and many of them from his usurpation of their castles and lands.

Everything favoured these conspirators. At home, the young Spenser, as little instructed by past dangers as his master, seemed to grow every day more arrogant; and an expedition against the Scots, like all the expeditions of this king against that people, proving a failure—followed by the usual inroads of the Scots, in one of which they nearly took the king prisoner, and in which they wasted the country to the very walls of York—created deep discontent and national irritation. Sensible of the lowering aspect of things in France, Edward, at length, after a war of three-and-twenty years, fruitful in disaster and ruin, now concluded a peace with Scotland for thirteen years. In this truce he did not recognise the title of Robert Bruce to the crown; but Bruce, who had made good his claim to it, who had repelled all the attacks of England on his country, given the enemy a great overthrow at Bannockburn, and on various occasions carried the war into England, satisfied himself with these substantial advantages.

Fortified on this side, Edward still did not sit secure. Soon after the treaty he was startled by a plot to cut off the elder Spenser, and then by an attempt to release the prisoners taken at Boroughbridge from their dungeons. This failed, but the conspiracy in France grew, and circumstances favoured it. Charles the Fair, the brother of Edward's queen, now on the throne, having, or pretending, causes of complaint against Edward's officers in the province of Guienne, overran that province with his arms, and took many of the castles. Edward apologised and offered to refer the causes of quarrel to the Pope; but Charles took advantage of his brother-in-law's difficulties, and endeavoured to deprive him of his French territories altogether. Edward sent out his brother, the Earl of Kent, to endeavour to negotiate matters, but without effect; and Isabella, who had long wished to quit the kingdom, now prevailed on the king to let her go over and arrange the business with her brother. Edward fell into the snare: the queen found herself in Paris, and the centre of a powerful band of British malcontents. One common principle animated the queen and the refugees of the Lancaster faction, and bound them together—hatred of the Spensers. The queen had come attended by a splendid retinue—for she came not only as Queen of England and Princess of France, but in the character of an ambassador. Publicly, therefore, she was received with every honour; and, publicly, she appeared to be negotiating for a settlement of her royal husband's difficulties; but as the mode of solving them, she conceded that he should come over in person and do homage for his provinces. This proposal, which astonished both the king and the whole court, was strenuously resisted by the younger Spenser. He well knew the feelings entertained by the queen towards him; and therefore would, on no account, trust himself in Paris with her. But to allow the king to proceed there alone was as full of danger. The king might there fall under the influence of some other person; and at home his own position would be most perilous during the king's absence, regarded as he was with universal hatred.

The king had advanced as far as Dover, where, no doubt, at the persuasion of the Spensers, he stopped, and, on the plea of illness, declined to proceed any farther. Foiled in this scheme, Isabella hit upon another, which was that Edward should make over Guienne and Ponthieu to his son, who then could go instead of his father, and perform the requisite homage. This was more easily fallen into by the king, because it suited young Spenser by keeping the king at home. Edward resigned Guienne and Ponthieu to his son, now thirteen years old, who went over, did the homage, and took up his residence with his mother.

The plot now began to unfold itself palpably. The queen was not only surrounded by a powerful body of English subjects hostile to their king, but she had the heir to the throne in her possession, and she determined never to return to England till she could drive young Spenser thence, and seize the reins of power herself. When, therefore, the homage being completed, Edward urged the return of his wife and son, he received at first evasive answers, which were soon followed by the foulest charges against him by his own queen. She complained that Hugh Spenser had alienated the king's affection from her; that he had sown continual discord between them; had brought the king to such a feeling against her, that he would neither see her nor come where she was. She accused the Spensers of seizing her dower and keeping her in a state of abject poverty and dependence, and, beyond all this, of having a design on the lives of both herself and son. The king put forth a defence of himself, but nothing could clear him from the charge of having grossly neglected the queen for his favourites, or of having most thoroughly merited her contempt and aversion.

But while the queen was doing the utmost to disgrace and ruin her husband, her own conduct was notoriously scandalous. During the life of the Earl of Lancaster she appears to have leaned very much on him for counsel and support; but now the Lord Mortimer was become the head of the Lancastrian party, and therefore necessarily was thrown daily into her society. Mortimer was handsome, brave, of insinuating address, and sufficiently unprincipled. The affairs of the party brought them into almost perpetual contact, and intimacy speedily ripened into intrigue and criminality. Very soon the position of the queen and Mortimer was generally known. They lived in the most avowed intimacy, and when Edward, made aware of it, insisted on Isabella's immediate return, she declared boldly that she would never set foot in England till Spenser was for ever removed from the royal presence and counsels. This public avowal won her instant popularity in England, where Spenser was hated, and threw for awhile a slight veil over her own designs. An active correspondence was opened with the discontented in England; the vilest calumnies were propagated everywhere against the king, and this disgraceful family quarrel became the common topic of all Europe.

The King of France, from motives of policy, declared himself highly incensed against Edward for his treatment of his sister, and even threatened to redress her wrongs. He still protected her, even after her open connection with Mortimer, though both himself and his two brothers had thrown their wives into prison for irregularity of conduct, where the wife of his brother Louis had been strangled. But though Charles probably never seriously intended to take any active measures on behalf of Isabella, Edward was greatly alarmed, and not only sent, in the name of Spenser, rich presents to the French king and his ministers, but also wrote to the Pope, earnestly imploring him to command Charles to restore to him his wife and son. This letter to the Pope was strongly backed, according to Froissart, "by much gold and silver to several cardinals and prelates nearest to the Pope." The interference of his holiness afforded a sufficient plea for Charles to withdraw all countenance from Isabella, and even to command her to quit the kingdom. To save appearances, therefore, Isabella quitted Paris, and betook herself to the court of the Count of

Holland and Hainault. That this was a step by no means disagreeable to Charles the Fair is obvious from the fact that the count was his own vassal, and suffered no remonstrance for this reception of the English queen. The partisanship of the count was of the most decided kind. The queen, the more indissolubly to engage him in her enterprise, affianced her son Edward, the heir to the English throne, to Philippa, his second daughter. The brother of the count, John of Hainault, became a perfect enthusiast in the cause of Isabella, who, still young—only eight-and-twenty years of age—and eminently beautiful, seemed to inspire him with all the chivalrous devotion of the most romantic ages. He declared his full faith in Isabella's innocence of all impropriety, with the spectacle of her intimacy with Mortimer daily before his eyes; and he was deaf to all warnings of danger from the jealousies of the English, who, he was assured, were especially disgusted by the interference of foreigners. By this alliance, and the secret assistance of her brother, the King of France, Isabella soon saw herself surrounded by an army of nearly 3,000 men.

ESCAPE OF ROGER MORTIMER FROM THE TOWER. (*See p.* 379.)

Edward, roused by the imminent danger, endeavoured to prepare measures of defence. But the danger was far more extensive than appeared on the surface. Conspiracy did not merely menace from abroad, but penetrated every day deeper, and into the very recesses of his own family. His brother, the Earl of Kent, a well-meaning but weak prince, who still remained on the Continent, was persuaded by Isabella and the King of France that it behoved every member of the royal family to join in the attempt to rid the kingdom of the Spensers; and this, they assured him, was the object of the expedition. Won over to what appeared so desirable an attempt, he also won over his elder brother, the Earl of Norfolk. The Earl of Leicester, the brother and heir of the Earl of Lancaster, had abundant motives of interest and vengeance for entering into the design. The Archbishop of Canterbury and many of the prelates approved of the queen's cause, and aided her with money; several of the most powerful barons were ready to embrace it on her appearance on the English coast; and the minds of the populace were embittered against the king by the industrious dissemination of calumnies and injurious truths.

Isabella set sail from the harbour of Dort with her little army, accompanied by the Earl of Kent; and on the 24th of September, 1326, landed at Orwell, in Suffolk. She was soon joined by the Earls of Norfolk and Leicester, thus receiving the high sanction of two princes of the blood; the Bishops of Lincoln, Ely, and Hereford met her with the sanction of the Church and numerous forces. The fleet had been won over and kept out of the way, and the land forces sent against her at once hailed the young prince with acclamations, and joined the Queen's banner. Isabella made a proclamation that she came to free the nation from the tyranny of the Spensers and of Chancellor Baldock, their creature. The barons, who thought themselves secure from forfeiture in coalition with the prince, made a reconciliation with the barons of the Lancastrian faction, and the people poured in on all sides. Never was a miserable monarch so deserted by his people, and by his own blood. His wife, his son, his brothers, his nobles, his prelates, his people, all were against him. The queen and prince stayed three days in the abbey of the Black Monks at Bury St. Edmunds, where their partisans continually increased.

Meantime, the wretched king appealed to the citizens of London to maintain the royal cause, and issued a proclamation offering £1,000 to any one for the head of Mortimer—a pretty sum, equal to £10,000 at the present day. The appeal remained totally unheeded; and Edward fled from his capital, accompanied only by the two Spensers, Baldock, the chancellor, and a few of their retainers. Scarcely were they out of the gates when the populace rose, seized the Bishop of Exeter, whom the king had appointed governor, beheaded him, and threw his body into the river. They met with and killed a friend of the favourites—one John le Marshal. They made themselves masters of the Tower, and liberated all the State prisoners—a numerous body, most of them suffering for the attempts to put down young Spenser—and then entered into an association to put to death without mercy every one who dared to oppose the queen and prince. Such was the fury of the populace against the king and his favourite; and this spirit appeared in every part of the kingdom.

The poor forsaken king fled to the Welsh, amongst whom he was born; but they would none of him, and he was compelled to take to the sea with his favourite. The elder Spenser was left in Bristol as governor of the castle; but the garrison mutinied against him, and on the approach of the queen he was delivered up to her. The poor old man, now nearly ninety, was brought before Sir William Trussel, one of the Lancastrian exiles, who, without allowing him to utter a word in his defence, condemned him to death. He was taken outside the walls of the city and hanged on a gibbet, his bowels were torn out, and his body was cut to pieces, and thrown to the dogs; and, as he had been made Earl of Winchester, his head was sent to that city, and stuck on a pole. Such was the fate of this old man, who had borne a high character through a long life, till strange fortune lifted him aloft, and developed in him the lurking demons of rapacity and lust of his neighbour's goods.

The unhappy king, meantime, with the son of this old man, endeavouring, it was supposed, to escape to Ireland, had been tossed about for many days on a stormy sea, which seemed to enter into the rebellion of his people, and to reject him and cast him up, as it were, on the coast of South Wales. His flight had furnished the barons with a fortunate plea for deposing him. They first issued a proclamation at Bristol, calling on the king to return to his proper post; and, as he did not appear, on the 26th of September, forming themselves into a Parliament, they declared that the king had left the realm without a ruler, and appointed the Prince of Wales guardian of the kingdom. The king, on landing, knowing what he had to expect, hid himself for some weeks in the mountains near Neath Abbey, in Glamorganshire. His place of retreat was very soon known, and young Spenser and Baldock were seized in the woods of Llantressan, and immediately afterwards Edward came forth and surrendered himself to the Earl of Leicester, the brother of Lancaster, whom he had beheaded at Pontefract. Without a single sign of sympathy or commiseration from high or low, the wholly-abandoned king was sent off a prisoner to Kenilworth. Short and bloody work was made with the favourite. Trussel, the same judge who had condemned his father, condemned him to be drawn, hanged, disembowelled, beheaded, and quartered; and the sentence was carried into execution with revolting minuteness. He was hanged on a gallows fifty feet high, and his servant, Simon Reding, was hanged on the same gallows, only a few yards lower. The Earl of Arundel, allied to the Spensers by marriage, and one of those active in the death of the Earl of Lancaster, was beheaded with two other noblemen. Baldock, as a priest, was exempt from the gallows; but, being sent to the Bishop of Hereford's palace in London, he was there seized by the enraged populace, as, probably, the senders foresaw, and, though rescued, died soon after in Newgate of his injuries. So terminated the fortunes of Edward's few adherents. His own fate, steeped in still deeper horrors, was fast hastening on.

A Parliament—one of those solemn mockeries which we often see in history—was summoned in the king's name to meet at Westminster on the 7th of January, 1327, to condemn the king himself. There Adam Orleton, Bishop of Hereford, one of the most violent partisans of the queen and a bitter enemy of the king, assumed the office of speaker. The very appearance of such a speaker indicated—had all other circumstances been wanting—the determination of the barons to proceed to extremities with Edward. Orleton, for his attachment to the party of Lancaster, had been deprived of the temporalities of his see by the king, at the instance, as supposed, of Hugh Spenser, and he had on every possible occasion since displayed the most vindictive animus against the king. He had spread with indefatigable activity the filth of the Court scandal respecting Edward, and this might have passed for religious zeal in one of his profession and rank in the Church had he not winked as resolutely at the notorious vice of the queen. But he was one of her most energetic partisans in England; he hastened to meet her on landing; and in the Parliament, and everywhere amongst the barons, when it had been proposed to allow the king to be reconciled to his family, and rule by advice of his nobles, he had effectually quashed such sentiments, and turned the tide of opinion for the king's deposition. He now put the formal question, whether the king should be restored, or his son at once be raised to the throne. For appearance' sake the members were left to deliberate in their own minds on the question till the next day; but there could be only one answer, and that was for the father's dethronement. The public, on hearing that decision, broke forth into loudest acclamations, which were vehemently reiterated when the young king, a boy of fourteen, was presented to them. By a singular informality, Parliament deposed Edward first, and judged him afterwards.

Five days after declaring the accession of Edward III., a charge was drawn up against his father, in which some eminent historians discern the malice of his enemies rather than impartial grounds of complaint. They say that, notwithstanding the violence of his opponents, no particular cause was laid to his charge. True, those which were loudly enough proclaimed by the public voice to be of a scandalous nature were omitted, probably out of respect to his son, who was present during the whole proceedings. But what they did charge him with were incapacity for government, waste of time on idle amusements, neglect of business, cowardice, being perpetually under the influence of evil counsellors, of having by imbecility lost Scotland and part of Guienne, with arbitrary and unconstitutional imprisonment, ruin, and death of different nobles.

Surely these, if not all crimes, had all the effect of crimes on the nation. They were fraught with mischief, public discord, and decay, and must be regarded as affording ample grounds for deposition. In fact, the whole kingdom was weary of the incorrigible king; not a single voice was raised in his behalf, and on the 20th of January a deputation was despatched to announce his deposition to him at Kenilworth. This deputation consisted of certain bishops, earls, and barons, with two knights from each shire, and two representatives from each borough. The most glaring feature of harshness in the selection of the deputies was that the spiteful Adam Orleton, and the savage Sir William Trussel, who had passed such barbarous sentences on Edward's friends the Spensers, were amongst its leading members. At sight of Orleton the king was so shocked that he fell to the ground. The interview took place in the great hall of Kenilworth, and the king appeared wrapped in a common black gown. Sir William Trussel, as speaker, pronounced the judgment of Parliament, and Sir Thomas Blount, the steward of the household, then broke his white staff of office, and declared all persons discharged and freed from Edward's service, the ceremony being the same as practised on a king's death. On the 24th King Edward III. was proclaimed, it being declared to be by the full consent of the late king;

on the 28th the young monarch received the great seal from the chancellor, and re-delivered it to him; and on the 29th he was crowned at Westminster by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The extreme youth of the king enabled Queen Isabella, his mother, to have the chief power of the crown vested in her. But her unconcealed connection with the Lord Mortimer made her very soon lose the popularity which her pretence of driving away the Spensers had obtained her. Both barons and people looked with ill-suppressed jealousy and disgust at the dangerous position of Mortimer; and however completely the late king had forfeited public favour, it was not long before the people began to feel that it was not the part of a wife to have invaded the kingdom, and deposed and pursued to death her husband and the father of her children. Isabella had indeed pretended to lament over this necessity, and to bewail the afflictions of her husband; but her actions belied her words and tears, for she still pressed on his abdication, and was all the time living in open adultery with her paramour Mortimer. Thus public feeling and indignation grew apace, and there were not wanting monks who boldly denounced from the pulpit the scandalous life of the queen, and awoke a feeling of commiseration for her captive husband. Those who beheld the proud Mortimer actually occupying, in the name of the queen, the seat of royal power, burned with not unnatural wrath at the degradation of the throne; those who saw the unfortunate Edward, gentle and depressed in his fallen fortunes, became touched with compassion for him. The Earl of Leicester, now Earl of Lancaster, though he had a brother's blood in his remembrance, could not help being affected with generous and kindly sentiments towards his prisoner, and was even suspected of entertaining more honourable intentions towards him.

These things were whispered to Isabella, and the king was speedily removed into the care of Sir John Maltravers, a man of a savage disposition, and embittered against the king by injuries received from him and his favourites. Maltravers appeared to study the concealment of his captive, removing him from time to time from one castle to another in the space of a few months. At length Lord Berkeley was added to the commission of custody, and the unhappy captive was lodged in Berkeley Castle, near the river Severn. While Lord Berkeley was there Edward was treated with the courtesy due to his rank and to his misfortunes; but that nobleman being detained at his manor of Bradley by sickness, the opportunity was taken to leave the dethroned king in the hands of two hardened and desperate ruffians, named Gournay and Ogle. These men appeared to take a brutal delight in tormenting him. They practised upon him daily every indignity which they could devise. It is stated that one day, when Edward was to be shaved, they ordered cold and filthy water from the castle ditch for that purpose; and when he desired it to be changed, they refused it with mockery, though the unfortunate prince burst into tears, and declared that he would have clean and warm water.

These modes of killing were, however, too slow for those who wanted to be secure from any popular revulsion of feeling in favour of the deposed monarch; and one night, the 21st of September, 1327, frightful shrieks were heard from the castle, and the next morning the gates were thrown open, and the people were freely admitted to see the body of the late king, who, it was said, had died suddenly in the night. Of the nature of that disease there was no doubt on the minds of any one, for the cries of the sufferer's agony had reached even to the town, waking up, says Holinshed, "numbers, who prayed heartily to God to receive his soul, for they understood by those cries what the matter meant." The murder of Edward of Carnarvon is one of the horrors of history. The fiends who had him in custody, it came out, had thrown him upon a bed, and held him down violently with a table, while they had thrust a red-hot iron into his bowels through a tin pipe. By this means there appeared no outward cause of death; but his countenance was distorted and horrible to look upon. Most of the nobles and gentlemen of the neighbourhood went to see the body, which was then privately conveyed to Gloucester, and buried in the abbey, without any inquiry or investigation whatever.

Edward, at the time of his murder, was forty-three years old. He had reigned nineteen years and a half, and spent about nine months in woful captivity after his deposition.

Maltravers, Gournay, and Ogle were held in universal detestation. Gournay was some years afterwards caught at Marseilles, and shipped for England; but was beheaded at sea, as was supposed, by order of some of the nobles and prelates in England, to prevent any damaging disclosures regarding their accomplices or abettors. Maltravers found means of doing service to Edward III., and eventually obtained a pardon.

This reign presents a melancholy example of the miseries which befell a nation in those days from a weak king. In those rude times the throne was not fenced about and supported by the maxims and institutions which nowadays enable very ordinary kings to fill their high post without any public inconvenience, and verify the observation of the celebrated Swedish chancellor, Oxenstierna, "See, my son, with how little sense a kingdom may be governed." In the time of Edward II. the convenient maxim had not been introduced that "the king can do no wrong." The monarch stood alone amid a race of powerful and ambitious barons, who were always ready to encroach on the throne, and could be restrained only by a strong hand. The king had not, as he has now, his council and his ministers to share his responsibilities, and to afford him the help of their united talents and advice. He acted more fully from his own individual views and, therefore, the consequences to the nation were the more directly good or evil as the king was wise or the reverse. In Edward II.'s reign the arms of the nation were disgraced, its hold on Scotland and France was weakened, and there was a vast amount of internal discord and civil bloodshed. We do not find those great enactments of laws which distinguished the reign of his father, and the estates of the crown were wasted on unworthy favourites. Yet, even in this reign the people gained something, as they have always done, from the necessities of kings. The barons, by the ordinances which they wrung from the weak hands of Edward, extended the privileges of Parliament, and circumscribed the power of the Crown. They decreed that all grants made without consent of Parliament should henceforth be invalid; that the king could not make war or leave the kingdom without consent of the baronage in Parliament assembled, who should appoint a regent during the royal absence; that the great officers of the crown and the governors of foreign possessions, should at all times be chosen by the baronage, or with their advice and assent in Parliament. These were important conquests from the Crown, and came in time to be the established privileges, not exclusively of the peers, but of Parliament at large.

BERKELEY CASTLE.

The very usurpations and arbitrary deeds of the favourites produced permanent good out of temporary evil; for the barons compelled Edward to renew the Great Charter, and introduced a new and most valuable provision into it—namely: "Forasmuch as many people be aggrieved by the king's ministers against right, in respect to which grievances no one can recover without common consent of Parliament, we do ordain that the king shall hold a Parliament once a year, or twice, if need be." Thus, out of this king's fatal facility to favouritism came not only his own destruction, but also that grand security of public liberty—the annual assembling of Parliament.

Besides the troubles related, the kingdom during this reign was afflicted by a severe famine, which lasted for several years. The dearth was not produced by drought, but by continued rains and cold weather, which destroyed the harvests and caused great mortality amongst the cattle, and, of course, raised the price of everything to an enormous pitch. Parliament foolishly endeavoured to keep down prices by enacting, in 1315, a tariff of rates for all necessaries of life, but they very soon discovered that such a device was useless, and therefore repealed it.

In this reign also took place one of those great political changes which spring of necessity from the progress of society; this was the abolition of the celebrated Order of the Knights Templars. This famous Order was one of three religious military Orders which arose out of the Crusades. The other two were the Knights of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, commonly called Knights Hospitallers, and the Teutonic Knights of St. Mary of Jerusalem, or German Knights of the Cross, all of which sprang up in the twelfth century. The foundation of the Order of Knights Templars, or Brethren of the Temple of Solomon, or Soldiers of the Temple, or Soldiers of Christ, took place in 1118 or 1119. Nine knights, all French, took a vow to maintain free passage for pilgrims to the Holy Land. To this vow they added those of poverty, chastity, obedience, and battle against the infidels. For six or seven years they did not add to their numbers, but in 1128 Pope Honorius II. confirmed a rule of the Council of Troyes on their behalf, thus fully recognising them as an orthodox body, the *Pauperes Commilitones*, or Poor Soldiers of the Holy City. Honorius appointed them to wear a white mantle, and in 1146 Eugenius III. added a red cross on the left breast, in imitation of the white cross of the Hospitallers, whose business it was to attend the sick and wounded, and entertain pilgrims. This red cross, borne also on their banners, became famous all over the world, from the valour of these knights, who hence acquired the common cognomen of Red Cross Knights.

The Order speedily grew into fame and popularity. Young men of the noblest families of every nation in Christendom eagerly sought admittance into it. They became extremely numerous, in time admitting priests and persons of lower rank, or esquires. Their chief seat after their expulsion from Jerusalem by Saladin was in Cyprus, but they had also "provinces" in Tripoli, Antioch, Portugal, Spain, France, England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Italy, and Sicily. Their history is the history of all the wars of the Christians against the infidels in the East, and for one hundred and seventy years they formed the most renowned portion of the Christian troops. But with fame came also immense wealth and—its usual sequence—corruption. Their vows had become a mockery. Instead of poverty and chastity, they grew notorious for the splendour of their abodes, and the pomp, luxury, and licentiousness of their lives.

In the time of Edward II. they had incurred the resentment of his brother-in-law, Philip the Fair, of France. They were suspected of exciting the Parisians to a resistance to the debasement of the coin, which Philip was noted for; but there needed no other temptation to their destruction with this needy prince than their enormous wealth. In 1306 the grand master of the Temple, Jacques de Molay, was summoned to Europe by Pope Clement V., who had secretly agreed with Philip to suppress the Order. De Molay was summoned on pretence of consulting with the Pope on uniting the two Orders of the Templars and Hospitallers. Witnesses were soon found to charge the whole Order of the Templars with the systematic practice of the most revolting crimes, and on the 12th of September, 1307, secret instructions were sent to all the governors of towns in France, by which in one night the whole of the Templars in France, including De Molay, were seized and thrown into prison. Their houses and property were everywhere seized, and their great stronghold, the Temple, in Paris, was taken possession of by Philip himself. For the space of six years there followed the most extraordinary and terrible scenes. The members of the Order were put to the most savage tortures to compel them to confess to the most incredible crimes and, on recanting their forced confessions, they were burnt at the stake. In Paris, Rheims, Sens, Vienne, and various other places, these dreadful cruelties and butcheries were perpetrated, till on the 22nd of March, 1312, the Pope abolished the Order for ever. On the 18th of March, 1314, De Molay, the grand master, and Guy, commander, or grand prior, of Normandy, were burnt on one of the small islands of the Seine.

In England and Ireland they were all in like manner arrested by sealed orders on a particular day, and their property of every kind, as well ecclesiastical as temporal, was confiscated. In this country, however, they were treated with great lenity: the witnesses brought against them refused to declare that they knew anything to their discredit, or, indeed, anything of their secret principles or practices. The Pope, incensed at this leniency, wrote strongly to Edward, exhorting him to try torture. A threat of treating them as heretics induced all but the grand master, William de la More, to confess their heresy; and they were sent to pass the remainder of their lives as prisoners in different monasteries, the revenues of their immense estates being conferred by king and Parliament on the Hospitallers, or Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. Their chief seat was the Temple, in Fleet Street, which they erected in 1185; but as early as the reign of Stephen they were established in the old Temple on the south side of Holborn, near the present Southampton Buildings.

So fell this mighty Order. Matthew Paris asserts that the number of their manors or estates throughout Christendom amounted to 9,000, and he estimates their yearly income at not less than £6,000,000 sterling. With the exception of Spain and Portugal, their property, as in England, was given to the Knights of St. John.

King Edward II. left four children, two sons and two daughters. Edward succeeded him; John, Earl of Cornwall, died early at Perth; Joan was married to David Bruce, King of Scotland; and Eleanor to Reginald, Duke of Gueldres.

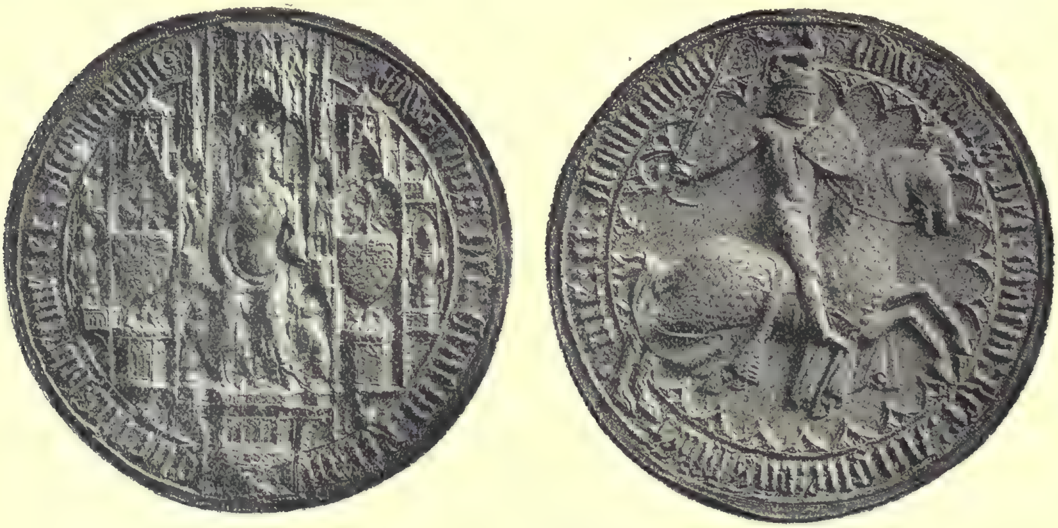
CHAPTER XXX.

THE REIGN OF EDWARD III.

The Regency—War with Scotland—Edward is Baffled—Peace with Scotland, and Death of Bruce—Kent's Conspiracy—Overthrow of Mortimer—Edward assumes Authority—Relations with Scotland—Balliol invades Scotland—Battle of Dupplin Moor—Edward supports Balliol—Battle of Halidon Hill—Scottish Heroines—Preparations for War with France—The Claims of Edward—Real Causes of the Quarrel—Alliances and Counter-Alliances—Edward Lands in Flanders—Is Deserted by his Allies and Returns to England—Battle of Sluys—Dispute with Stratford—The Breton Succession Question—Renewal of the War—Derby in Guienne—Edward Lands in Normandy—Battle of Creçy.

THE sceptre of England, taken by the indignant nation from the feeble grasp of Edward of Carnarvon, was once more in the hand of a strong man. Edward III., sprung immediately from a feeble parent, was, however, of the stock of mighty kings, and the grandson of the first of his name, the stern "Hammer of Scotland," and conqueror of Wales. In the youthful monarch all the vigour and ability of Edward I. revived; and in his reign the fame of England rose far higher than it had ever yet reached, bringing the two words of martial glory, "Creçy" and "Poitiers," into the language, and making them to sound like a trumpet in the ears of Englishmen in every age. True, the conquests which they marked soon faded away; but the prestige of British valour which they created was created for all time. In no period of our history did the spirit of chivalry show more in the ascendant than in this reign, nor leave names of more knightly lustre on the page of our history; including not only the monarch and his illustrious son, but a numerous list of leaders in the field. Whether the practical utility or the political wisdom of the great deeds done, exclusive of the renown conferred on the nation, was equal to their *éclat*, remains for us to determine after our record of them. But at the commencement of his reign the future conqueror of Creçy was but a boy of fourteen. The lion of England was yet but the ungrown and playful cub, and was under the guardianship of a mother of tarnished reputation, and in the real power of her bold paramour, Roger Mortimer.

For appearance' sake, indeed, a council of regency was appointed during the minority of the young king; and this council was composed of twelve of the most influential noblemen and prelates of the realm. Having named this regency, the Parliament then passed an act of indemnity, including all those engaged in the deposition of the late king; reversed the attainders against the late Earl of Lancaster and his adherents; confiscated the immense and ill-gotten estates of the Despensers; and granted to the queen-mother a large sum of money to discharge her debts, and a jointure of £20,000 a year—a sum quite equal in value to £100,000 now. This last enactment, in fact, established the supremacy of the queen and her paramour Mortimer: the council became, as they meant it to be, a mere empty figure of State policy; Mortimer—who had taken care not even to have his name placed on the council, as affecting the modesty of a private man—now that all appeared secure, assumed the state and establishment of a king.



GREAT SEAL OF EDWARD III.

Boy, however, as the king was, his spirit was too active and inquiring to leave him with safety unemployed about the court: there he would be sure to be soon making observations, which, ere long, might bring trouble to the usurpers. Mortimer tried to keep him entertained by various frivolous amusements; but some employment more active and engrossing was needed, which would lead him to a distance from the court; and this was speedily furnished by the Scots. Their successes over Edward II. and especially their grand triumph at Bannockburn, had greatly elated them; and the present crisis, when a king had been deposed, and a mere boy was on the throne, appeared too tempting an opportunity for a profitable incursion into England. Robert Bruce was now growing, if not old, yet infirm; but he was as full as ever of martial daring.

At this distance of time it seems equally impolitic and ungenerous in the Scots to make this attack. There was a truce between the kingdoms, and it might appear as if it would have been in every way more prudent for the Scots to strengthen and consolidate their internal forces than thus wantonly to provoke their old and potent enemies. But the state of rancour between the two countries no doubt impelled them to this course. Probably, too, the hope of regaining at such a period the northern provinces of England, which had formerly belonged to Scotland, was an actuating cause.

Bruce appointed to this service his two great generals, the good Lord James Douglas and his nephew, Thomas Randolph, now Earl of Moray. They were to lay waste the counties of Durham and Northumberland, and do all the injury to England that they could. They made an attempt on the castle of Norham, but were repulsed, with heavy loss. They then increased their army to 25,000, summoning the vassals of the Scottish crown from every quarter—Highlands, Lowlands, and isles.

This army of Scots has been most graphically described by Froissart. He represents them as lightly armed, nimble, and hardy, and, from their simple mode of living, capable of making rapid marches or retreats, being totally unencumbered with baggage. There were 4,000 cavalry, well-mounted and well-armed; the rest were mounted on ponies, active, but strong, which could pick up a subsistence anywhere. The men carried no provisions, except a small bag of oatmeal, and, says the chronicler, "they had no need of pots or pans, for they cooked the beasts, when they had skinned them, in a simple manner." That is, they killed the cattle of the English, of which they found plenty on their march, and roasted the flesh on wooden spits, or boiled it in the skins of the animals themselves, putting in a little water with the beef, to prevent the hides from being burnt. They also cut up the hides for their shoes, fitting them to their feet and ankles while raw, with the hair outwards; so that from this cause the English called them the rough-footed Scots, and *red-shanks*, from the colour of the hides.

Every man carried at his saddle an iron plate, called a girdle, on which, whenever they halted, they could bake cakes of thin oatmeal. Thus armed and thus provisioned, the Scots could speed from mountain to mountain and from glen to glen with amazing rapidity, advancing to pillage, or disappearing at the approach of an enemy, as if they were nowhere at hand. With such forces Douglas and Randolph crossed the Tweed, ravaged Durham and Northumberland, and advanced into the county of York.

To oppose these invaders the English raised rapidly an army said to amount to 60,000 men. They had recalled John of Hainault and some cavalry which they had dismissed; and the young king of fourteen, burning with impatience to chastise the Scots, marched hastily towards the north. His progress, however, suffered some delay at York, from a violent quarrel which broke out between the English archers, and the foreign troops under John of Hainault. The archers, and especially those of Lincolnshire, who probably had an old feud with the natives of Flanders, displayed a dogged dislike to these troops, and in the streets of York they came actually to downright battle, and many men were killed on both sides. This difference quelled, if not settled, the English army moved on. Very soon they came in sight of burning farms and villages, which marked the track of the Scots. These Scots, however, themselves were nowhere visible, for they retreated with double the celerity with which the English, heavily loaded with baggage, could follow them. The Scots did not retreat directly north, but took, according to Froissart, their way westward amongst the savage deserts and "bad mountains and valleys," as he calls them, of Cumberland and Westmoreland. The English crossed the Tyne, trusting to cut off the homeward route of the enemy; but the utterly desolated condition of the country compelled them to recross that river, for no sustenance could be procured for the troops. After thus vainly pursuing this light-footed foe for some time, Edward, excessively chagrined in not being able to come up with them, or even to find them, offered a freehold worth £100 a year, and the honours of knighthood to any one who would bring him intelligence of the enemy. After the soldiers had undergone severe hardships and enormous fatigue wading through waters and swamps, a man, one Thomas of Rokeby, came riding hard to the camp and claimed the reward offered by the king. He said he had been made prisoner by the Scots, and that they had said they should be as glad to see the English king as he would be to see them. This was not very probable, as they might have waited for the king, which they had taken care not to do. They lay, however, at not more than three leagues distant.

The reason why the Scots had halted was visible enough when the English came up. They found them posted on the right bank of the Wear, where the river was deep and rapid, and there was no possibility of getting at them. Even could they cross the river, they must climb a steep hill in face of the enemy to attack them. Under these circumstances, Edward sent a challenge to the Scottish generals to meet him on a fair and open field, either by drawing back and allowing him to cross the river to attack them, or giving them the same option to cross over to his side. Douglas, annoyed at this proposal, advised to accept the challenge; but the more politic Moray refused, and replied to Edward that he never took the advice of an enemy in any of his movements. He reminded the king, as if to pique him to dare the unequal attempt of crossing in their faces, how long they had been in his country, spoiling and wasting at their pleasure. If the king did not like their proceedings, he added, insultingly, he might get over to them the best way he could.

Edward kept his ground opposite to them for three days; the Scots at night making huge fires along their lines, and all night long, according to the chronicler, "horning with their horns, and making such a noise as if all the great devils from hell had come there." In the daytime some of the most adventurous knights from the English army swam their strong horses across the river, and skirmished with the Scots—rather to show their gallantry than for any real effect. On the fourth morning it was found that the Scots had entirely decamped, and were discovered after awhile posted in a still stronger position higher up the river. Here Edward again sat down facing them, confidently hoping that they must be forced, from want of provisions, to come out and fight. As, however, they did not do this, the young king's patience became exhausted, and he desired to pass the river at all hazards, and come to blows with the Scots. This Mortimer would not assent to; and while lying, highly discontented with this restraint, on the bank of the river, Edward had a narrow escape of being taken prisoner.

The brave Douglas, being held back by Moray, as Edward was by Mortimer, from a general engagement, planned one of those heroic exploits in which he so much delighted. Making himself acquainted with the English password for the night, and taking an accurate survey of the English camp, he advanced, when it was nearly night, with 200 picked horsemen, silently crossed the river, at some distance above the English position, and then, as silently turning, made for the English camp. He found it carelessly guarded, and, seeing this, he rode past the English sentinels, as if he had been an English officer, saying, "Ha, St. George! you keep bad watch here!" Presently, he heard an English soldier say to his comrades, as they lay by a fire, "I cannot tell what is to happen here, but somehow I have a great fear of the Black Douglas playing us some trick."

"You shall have cause to say so," said Douglas to himself. When he had got fairly into the English camp, he cut the ropes of a tent with his sword, calling out his usual war-cry, "A Douglas! a Douglas! English thieves, ye are all dead men." His followers immediately fell upon the camp, cutting down the tents, overturning them, and killing the men as they started up to grasp their arms. Douglas, meanwhile, had reached the royal pavilion, and was as near as possible seizing the young king, but the chaplain, the chamberlain, and some of the king's household, being alarmed, stood boldly in his defence, and enabled him to escape under the canvas of the tent, though they lost their own lives. Douglas, being now separated from his followers, many of whom were killed, endeavoured to make good his retreat, but was in danger of being killed by a man who attacked him with a huge club. This man, however, he slew, and escaped in safety to his own camp; his party having, it is said, killed about 300 men.

Soon after this the Scots made an effectual retreat in the night by having beforehand cut a pathway through a great bog which lay behind them, and filling it with faggots; the road may still be seen in Weardale, and called from this cause the "Shorn Moss." The young king, on entering the evacuated place of encampment the next day, found nothing but six Englishmen tied to trees, with their legs broken, to prevent them from carrying any intelligence to their countrymen.

Edward, disgusted with his want of success, returned southward, and the Scots arrived in safety in their own country. On reaching York the English king disbanded his army. He then returned to London, highly dissatisfied, young as he was, with the state of things. Mortimer had usurped all power. Edward believed that from cowardice, or from some hidden motive, he had prevented him from taking ample vengeance on the Scots. At court he had set aside the whole of the royal council; consulted neither prince of the blood nor the nobles on any public measure, concentrating in himself, as it were, all the sovereign authority. He endowed the queen with nearly the whole of the royal revenues, and enjoyed them in her name. He himself was so besieged with his own party and parasites, that no one else could approach him, and all sorts and conditions of men now hated him as cordially as they had once done Gaveston.

Sensible of this public odium, Mortimer sought to make a peace with Scotland, to secure himself from attack on that side; and perhaps the king was not so far wrong in attributing his backwardness to attack the Scots to some private motive. Certain it is that in the following year, 1328, he made peace with Robert Bruce on terms which astonished and deeply incensed the whole nation. To give the greatest firmness to the treaty he proposed a marriage between Joan or Joanna, the sister of Edward, then only seven years of age, and David, the son of Robert Bruce, then only five. That the Scots might accede promptly to this offer, he agreed to renounce the great principle for which the English nation had been so long contending—its claim of right to the crown of Scotland. These terms were, of course, eagerly accepted, and the treaty, to make all sure, was at once carried into effect. About Whitsuntide a Parliament was called together at Northampton which ratified the treaty, thus acknowledging the full independence of Scotland, and on the 22nd of July, the marriage was solemnised at Berwick, where Isabella had brought her daughter. This young bride was significantly called by the Scots "Joan Makepeace," and with her were delivered up many jewels, charters, &c., which had been carried away from Scotland by Edward I.

In return for these unlooked-for advantages, Bruce agreed to pay the King of England 30,000 marks as compensation for damages done in his kingdom.

Edward himself, a few months previous to this marriage of his sister, had received his long-affianced wife, Philippa of Hainault, who had been brought to this country by Isabella's champion, John of Hainault, the young queen's uncle. Philippa proved one of the best wives and queens the annals of England can boast.

We may here notice the death of Robert Bruce, which took place in the following year, 1329. He was by no means old, being only fifty-four, but he was worn down by disease and infirmities contracted through the severe exertions, hardships, and exposures endured in his stupendous endeavours for the liberation of Scotland. He entered into contest with an enemy who appeared to most men too powerful for any hope of success, and left his country at peace and independent.

With some exceptions, even in that hard and iron age, his character was marked by great tenderness and amiability. His destruction of the Red Comyn was an act which, though dictated by policy, his conscience never approved. On his death-bed he reverted to it, declaring that he had always meant to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in expiation of the crime, but, as he could not do that, he commissioned his dearest friend and bravest warrior to carry his heart thither. In contrast to and palliation of the slaughter of the Red Comyn, we may place such actions as that in which he stopped his army in retreat in Ireland, because a poor woman, who had just given birth to a child, had no means of being conveyed on with the troops, and was heard by him lamenting that she should be left to the cruelties of the Irish. No sooner did Bruce understand her complaint than he looked round on his officers with eyes which kindled like fire, and exclaimed, "Gentlemen, never let it be said that a man, who was born of a woman and nursed by a woman's tenderness, could leave a mother and an infant to the mercy of barbarians. In the name of God, let the odds and the risk be what they will, let us fight rather than leave these poor creatures behind us." The army halted and drew up in order of battle, and Edmund Butler, the English general, believing that Bruce had received reinforcements, hesitated to attack him; so that Bruce had opportunity to send on the woman and child, and retreat at his leisure.

Robert Bruce died at his castle of Cardross on the 7th of June, 1329; and Douglas, some time after, setting out with several brave knights to carry the heart of the king to Jerusalem, enclosed in a silver case, and hung from his neck, stopped to fight the infidels in Spain, where he was killed; but his remains were brought back to Scotland, as well as the heart of Bruce, which was buried behind the high altar in the abbey of Melrose. The body of Bruce was interred in the church of Dunfermline, where some years ago the tomb was opened, and the remains of his bones were found, and clearly identified, after a rest of more than 500 years, by the breastbone having been sawn through to take out the heart, and by fragments of the cloth of gold in which he was known to have been wrapped.

The peace thus concluded with Scotland did not make Mortimer feel as secure as he had hoped. Indeed, it added much to the popular resentment against him. His having so readily yielded up the claims of the nation on Scotland wounded the public feeling; whilst his arbitrary and ambitious conduct in domestic affairs drew upon him the hatred of the people and the jealousy of the nobles. He assumed a splendour even outvying royalty. He grasped, like all favourites, at riches and honours insatiably. At the Parliament held in October at Salisbury he caused himself to be created Earl of March, or Lord of the Marches of Wales. He grossly abused the prerogative of purveyance, thus robbing the people extensively. Amongst the barons who beheld this haughty career of Mortimer with disgust, were the Earls of Lancaster, Kent, and Norfolk, all princes of the blood. Lancaster was guardian of the king, yet he was kept carefully in the hands of Mortimer and the queen-mother. Lancaster therefore determined to assert the authority of his office, and put some check on Mortimer: but coming to a contest at Winchester, he was obliged to retreat, and Mortimer then fell on his estates, and ravaged them as he would an enemy's country. When the three earls were summoned to Parliament at Salisbury, he strictly forbade them to come attended by an armed body; a common, though an illegal, practice in those times

They complied with the command, but found, on approaching the city, that Mortimer himself was attended by his party and their followers all strongly armed. Alarmed for their personal safety, they made a hasty retreat, and were returning with their forces, when, from some cause unknown, the Earls of Kent and Norfolk suddenly deserted Lancaster, who was compelled to make a humiliating submission, and pay a heavy fine. Through the intercession of the prelates, the peace was apparently restored amongst these powerful men.

Probably Kent and Norfolk had been tampered with to induce them to desert Lancaster; certain it is that soon after, the weak but well-meaning Kent was made the victim of a gross stratagem by Mortimer. He surrounded Kent by his creatures, who asserted that his brother, Edward II., was still alive. The earl's remorse for the share he had in his brother's ruin made him eagerly listen to a story of this kind. They represented to him that it was a fact well and widely known amongst the people, that the body said to be the king's, which was exhibited at Berkeley Castle, and afterwards buried at Gloucester, was not his, but that he was now actually a prisoner in Corfe Castle. Some monks lent themselves to the base scheme; and exhorted the Earl of Kent to rise to the rescue of his unfortunate brother, assuring him that his fate excited the deepest feeling, and that various nobles and prelates, from whom they professed to come, would at once join in the generous enterprise. No means were spared to lead their victim into the snare. Letters were forged, as coming from the Pope, stimulating him to this course, as one

ROBERT BRUCE'S LAST ORDERS TO DOUGLAS. (*See p.* 391.)

required of him as a brother. The earl, wholly deceived by this infamous conspiracy, wrote letters to his supposed captive brother, which were handed to Sir John Maltravers, believed by the earl to be cognisant of the poor king's incarceration, but in reality one of his murderers. These letters were duly conveyed to Mortimer and the queen-mother, and were speedily treated as ample proofs of the earl's treasonable designs. The earl was invited to come to Winchester, where a Parliament, consisting solely of the faction of the wicked queen and Mortimer, arrested him on the charge of conspiring against the government, and condemned him to death and loss of his estate. Lest the young king should take compassion on his uncle, the queen and Mortimer hastened his execution. But now was seen a singular thing. Not a man could be found who would take the office of executioner; and the son of the great Edward I. stood on the scaffold before the castle gate for many hours, waiting for a headsman. Such was the detestation of that lascivious woman and of her base and murderous paramour, and such the veneration for that worthy nobleman, that not a man, of any degree whatever, either of the city or neighbourhood, could be induced by rewards or menaces to take up the axe, till a mean wretch from the Marshalsea prison, to save his own life, at length consented to take the life of Edmund of Woodstock, Earl of Kent. This was the more remarkable because complaints had been made by the public of the insolence and rapacity of the earl's retainers, who, on the plea of the royal right of purveyance, would take anything as they rode abroad without thinking of paying the parties to whom it belonged. This was, indeed, a great complaint, which was frequently brought to Parliament against all the princes of the blood of those times, who used the privilege of purveyance to plunder the defenceless people at will. Personally, however, the Earl of Kent was much beloved; and though the king, his nephew, had signed the sentence, the guilt of it was charged on the queen-mother and Mortimer. The alleged accomplices of the earl were allowed to escape, except Robert de Teuton and a poor prior, who had told the earl that he had raised a spirit to inquire whether Edward II. was really still living. This poor man was imprisoned for life.

MELROSE ABBEY.

The wickedness and rapacity of the queen and Mortimer did not cease there. Lancaster was thrown into prison. Numbers of the nobility and prelates were implicated, and Mortimer used this fear of treason to crush his enemies and aggrandise himself by their property. The estate of the Earl of Kent he gave to his younger son Geoffrey; the vast demesnes of the Spensers he seized for himself. His power became most ominous, and his deeds of arbitrary injustice were more and more complained of, till all parties forgot their mutual feuds and united against him.

It is the fate of overgrown upstarts never to foresee their ruin. Had not this blind fatality attached to Mortimer in common with his class, he must have been sensible that the young king was of a character and arriving at an age which would bring his destruction. There were not wanting rumours at the time that Mortimer did not overlook this probable issue, and had thoughts of destroying the king and assuming the crown. His own time, however, was come. Edward, long galled by the restraint in which he was held, now approached his eighteenth year, and his queen, Philippa, had already brought him a son, afterwards the famous Black Prince, who was born at

Woodstock about three months after the execution of the Earl of Kent. The conduct of the queen and Mortimer was become more openly scandalous, and it was generally said that Isabella was about to become a mother. Edward resolved to act; but he was aware that he was closely surrounded by the spies of Mortimer, and he went to work with all the caution of a man conspiring against his sovereign. He fixed on the Lord Montacute as the nobleman in whose prudence and fidelity he had the most confidence. Lord Montacute entered cordially into his plans, and soon engaged some trusty and influential friends in the enterprise.

The queen dowager and Mortimer were residing in the castle of Nottingham. The king and his coadjutors determined to make that fortress the scene of their undertaking. A Parliament was summoned to meet there in October of the year 1330. In order, however, as is supposed, to prevent suspicion of the king being bent on any high designs, he held a tournament in Cheapside, which continued three days, and in which he and twelve others jousted with all knights that appeared in the lists. The young queen presided, and was regarded with extreme favour by the people; an interest which was much heightened by an accident—the breaking down of the platform on which she sat with many other ladies of the court, but from which they escaped without injury.

The time being arrived for the opening of Parliament, Edward, with his barons, prelates, and retainers, repaired to the ancient town of Nottingham. The young king took up his quarters in the castle with his mother and Mortimer, a convenient arrangement, as gaining him access to, and exact knowledge of, the lodging of the earl, and also as preserving him from any suspicion. The barons, bishops, and knights took up their quarters in the town. Mortimer appeared in high state, accompanied wherever he went by a strong body of his devoted followers. The plans of Edward and his coadjutors were settled; and Lord Montacute was seen riding away into the country with a numerous body of his friends and attendants, as if going on a visit to some neighbouring baron. This, undoubtedly, was intended to divert suspicion; but the plot had not been so closely kept as to escape the quick ears of the emissaries of Mortimer. On the afternoon of that day he entered the council with a face inflamed with rage. He declared to the council that a base attempt was in agitation against the queen and himself, and charged Edward bluntly with being concerned in it. Edward as stoutly denied the charge, but Mortimer pronounced his denial false. The council broke up in confusion. The castle, standing on a lofty precipice overlooking the lovely valley of the Trent, was strongly fortified on the side of the town. A numerous guard was placed around it under these alarming circumstances, and Mortimer and his adherents were all on the alert to watch against surprise, and to devise schemes of defeat and vengeance on their enemies. It did not appear a very easy matter to secure the usurper in that stronghold.

But the town and castle of Nottingham are built on a soft sandstone rock, in which the ancient inhabitants had sunk many caves, deep cells, and passages. One of these descended from the castle court to the foot of the precipice near the small river Leen, where the entrance was at that time concealed by a wild growth of bushes. Probably the existence of this passage was wholly unknown to Mortimer and the queen; and the criminal couple, having the strong military guard placed at the gates at evening, and the keys conveyed to the queen, who laid them by her bedside, deemed themselves perfectly secure. But Lord Montacute had sounded Sir William Eland, the governor, who entered at once most zealously into the design. By him Montacute and his friends were admitted through this passage, still called "Mortimer's Hole," and on arriving in the court they were joined by the king, who led the way in profound silence and in darkness to an apartment adjoining the hall, in which they could hear the voices of Mortimer, the Bishop of Lincoln, and others of his friends, in anxious discussion. Suddenly the concealed party burst open the door, and killed two of Mortimer's friends who attempted to make a defence. Queen Isabella, who lay in an adjoining apartment, rushed in terror from her bed, imploring her "sweet son" to spare her "gentle Mortimer." Her tears and entreaties for "her worthy knight, her dearest friend, her beloved cousin," were in vain; the Lord of the Marches and dictator of the kingdom was led away in safe custody, and on the morrow brought before Parliament, and condemned to death on the charges of having usurped the royal power vested in the council of regency; of having procured the death of the late king; of having beguiled the Earl of Kent into a conspiracy to restore that prince—that is, to restore a dead man; of having compassed exorbitant grants of the Crown lands; of having dissipated the public treasures; of having embezzled 20,000 marks of the money paid by the King of Scots; besides many other high crimes and misdemeanors. A more general parliament, summoned at Westminster on the 26th of November, confirmed this sentence, that he should be hanged and drawn as a traitor. In the informality of the times, Mortimer was not allowed to make any defence; nor were witnesses produced for or against him. He was at once declared guilty from the notoriety of his crimes. On this ground, nearly twenty years afterwards, the sentence was reversed by Parliament in favour of his son; the plea being the illegality of the proceedings.

Mortimer was hanged at the Elms, near London, on the 29th of November, and with him Sir Simon Beresford, as an accomplice. Three others, who were likewise included in the sentence, one of them being the infamous Maltravers, escaped.

Edward now made proclamation that he had taken the government of the realm into his own hands. He shut up his mother in Castle Rising, abolished her extravagant jointure, but allowed her £3,000, and afterwards £4,000, a year. There she passed twenty-seven years, her son paying her a visit once or twice annually, but taking care that she never again regained any public influence or authority.

Having disposed of his shameless mother, Edward found ample employment in restoring rule and order to his kingdom. As in all times when lawless power prevails at court, robbers, murderers, and criminals had increased to an enormous extent; public justice was grossly perverted, and abuses and wrongs everywhere abounded. He issued writs to the judges, commanding them to administer justice firmly, promptly, and without fear or favour, paying no regard whatever to any injunctions from the ministers of the Crown or any other power. He sought out and severely punished the abuses in the administration of the State, and exacted from the peers a solemn pledge that they should break off all connection with malefactors—a circumstance which gives us a curious insight into the times, the great barons keeping the robbers and outlaws in pay against each other, and even against the king. This done, Edward turned his attention to what appeared the grand hereditary object of the English crown of that day, the subjugation of Scotland.

The great Robert Bruce, as we have seen, had left his son David, a mere boy, on the throne. He could not but be anxious for the stability of his position with such a powerful kingdom and martial young king in his immediate neighbourhood, and with the long-pursued claims and attempts of England on Scotland. Bruce had, indeed, taken a strong precaution against the invasion of his son's peace by marrying him to the sister of Edward of England. But the temptation of ambition in princes has almost always proved far stronger than the ties of blood, and so it proved in Edward's case. We might have expected that he would maintain rather than attempt to destroy the happiness and fair establishment of his sister on the throne of Scotland. But the spirit of military domination was as powerful in Edward as in his grandfather. He could not forget that Scotland had nearly been secured by England, and that the English had lost prestige at Bannockburn. He burned, therefore, to restore the reputation of the English arms, and complete the design of uniting the whole of the island of Great Britain into one kingdom—the life-long aim and dying command of Edward I.

When princes are desirous of pleas of aggression it is never difficult to find them, and in this case they were abundant and plausible. In the treaty of peace and alliance concluded between Bruce and Edward at Northampton, when Joan was affianced to the heir of Scotland, just before Bruce's death, it was stipulated that both the Scottish families who had lost their estates in Scotland by taking part with the English in the late wars, and the English nobles who had claims on estates there by marriage or heirship, should all be restored to them. The Scottish estates were restored; but Bruce, perceiving that those of the English were much more valuable than the others, had been unwilling to allow so many dangerous subjects of the English king to establish themselves in the heart of his realm, where they might become formidable enemies. He had therefore put off their urgent demands of fulfilment of this stipulation, on the plea that it required time and caution to dispossess the potent Scottish barons now holding them. The claim of Lord Henry Percy was conceded; those of the Lords Wake and Beaumont, the latter of whom claimed the earldom of Buchan in right of his wife, were disregarded. Beaumont, a man of great power, and of a determined character, resolved by some means to conquer his right. He urged it upon Edward to redress the wrongs of his subjects; but Edward, now freed from the ascendency of Mortimer, though nothing loath, pleaded the impossibility of his armed interference in the face of the late solemn treaty and alliance, and he had used persuasions in vain. Probably, however, he gave the malcontents to understand that he would not prevent them from trying to help themselves. Not only was Bruce dead, but his two great warriors and statesmen, Moray and Douglas, were dead also. Moray had been left regent and guardian of the young King David, still only about nine years of age; but to his vigorous administration had succeeded that of the Earl of Mar, another nephew of Robert Bruce, and a much inferior man.

At this favourable crisis Beaumont turned his attention upon Edward Balliol, the son of John Balliol, who had been in vain placed on the Scottish throne by Edward I. John Balliol had retired to his patrimonial estate in Normandy, where he had died, and where his son Edward had continued to reside in privacy. His pretensions to the Scottish crown had been so decidedly repelled by the Scots, that he had given up all idea of ever reviving them; and for some private offence he had been thrown into prison. There Beaumont found him; and selecting him as the very instrument which he needed to authorise a descent on Scotland immediately, on the ground of his sufferings as a private person, obtained his release, and took him away with him to England, the French king suspecting nothing of the real design. There he represented to Edward the splendid opportunity which thus presented itself of regaining the ascendency over Scotland by putting forward Balliol as claimant of the crown. Edward could not do this openly for many reasons. In the first place, nothing could be more injurious to his character for justice and natural affection, were he with a preponderating force to attack the throne of a minor, and that

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minor his brother-in-law. In the next place he was bound by a solemn treaty not to assault or prejudice the kingdom of Scotland for four years, and the penalty for the violation of this engagement was £20,000.

The Regent of Scotland, however, as well as the late king, had always admitted the justice of the claims of the disinherited nobles, yet had always evaded all demands for restoration. Edward's plan, therefore, was to meet artifice with artifice; and accordingly he connived at the assembling of Balliol's forces in the north of England, and at the active preparations of the nobles who intended to join him. Anticipating that the Borders would be strongly armed, they took their way by sea in a small fleet, which set sail from Ravenspur, an obscure port, and soon landed at Kinghorn, in Fifeshire. The Scots, who detested the Balliols as pretenders under the patronage and for the ultimate purposes of England, flocked in thousands to the national standard against him. The Earl of Fife, too precipitately attacking Balliol's forces, was at once defeated, and the invaders marched northward towards Dupplin. Near this place the Regent Mar lay with an army said to number 40,000 men. The river Earn lay between the hostile hosts, and it was evidently the policy of the Scots to delay a general engagement till the Earl of March, who was rapidly advancing from the south of Scotland, came up, when the handful of English must have been surrounded and overpowered. But Balliol, or his allies the English barons, perceived this danger clearly enough, and they suddenly crossed the river in the night, before they could be taken in the rear by March. They found the Scots, confident in their numbers, carelessly sleeping without sentries or outposts, and falling upon them in the dark, made terrible slaughter amongst them. In the morning the Scots, who had fled in confusion, perceiving the insignificant force to which they had yielded, returned with fury to retrieve their character, but they again committed the blunder of over-confidence, came on in disorder, engaged without regard to the nature of the ground—which was much in favour of the enemy—and were once more defeated with huge slaughter. Many thousands

INTERRUPTING BALLIOL'S CHRISTMAS DINNER. (*See p.* 398.)

of the Scots were driven into the river and drowned, while some were actually smothered by tumbling over each other in the chaotic flight, and others were cut to pieces. The regent himself, the Earl of Carrick, a natural son of Robert Bruce, the Earls of Atholl and Monteith, and the Lords Hay of Erroll, Keith, and Lindsay were slain. With them fell from 12,000 to 13,000 men, while Balliol lost only about thirty; a sufficient proof of the rawness of the Scottish forces, and the frightful panic amongst them. The battle of Dupplin Moor was one of the most sanguinary and complete defeats which the Scots ever suffered, and appeared to obliterate all the glories and benefits of Bannockburn.

The victorious army marched direct on Perth, which it quickly reduced. Balliol was rapidly pursued by the Earl of March and Sir Archibald Douglas, whose united armies still amounted to near 40,000 men. They blockaded Perth both by land and water, and proposed to reduce it by famine. But Balliol's ships attacked the Scottish ones, gained a complete victory, and thus opened the communication with Perth from the sea. This compelled the Scots to disband for want of provisions to maintain a long siege. The adherents of Balliol's family, and all those who in any such crisis are ready to fall to the winning side, now came flocking in; the nation was actually conquered by this handful of men, and Balliol, on the 24th of September, 1332, was crowned King of Scotland at Scone. David and his young betrothed queen were sent off for security to the castle of Dumbarton; the Bruce party solicited a truce, which was granted; and thus in little more than a month Balliol had won a kingdom.

But the success of Edward Balliol was as unreal as a dream; he was a mere phantom king. The Scottish patriots were in possession of many of the strongest places in the kingdom, while the adherents of Edward Balliol, each hastening to secure the property he was in search of, the forces of the new monarch were rapidly reduced in number, and he saw plainly that he could maintain his position on the throne of Scotland only by the support of the King of England. He hastened, therefore, to do homage to him for the Scottish crown, and proposed to marry Joan, the sister of the king, the affianced bride of the dethroned David, if the Pope's consent to the dissolution of that marriage could be obtained. Edward listened to this, but the prompt removal of the royal pair from Dumbarton Castle to France, and the defeat of Balliol, which as promptly followed, ruined the unprincipled scheme. No sooner were these scandalous proposals known in Scotland, than a spirit of intense indignation fired the minds of the patriotic nobles. The successors of those great men who had achieved the freedom of Scotland under Robert Bruce, John Randolph, second son of the regent; Sir Archibald Douglas, the younger brother of the good Lord James; Sir William Douglas, a natural son of the Lord James, possessor of the castle of Hermitage, in Liddesdale, and thence called the Knight of Liddesdale, a valiant and wealthy man, but fierce, cruel, and treacherous; and Sir Andrew Murray, of Bothwell (who had married Christiana, the sister of Robert Bruce, and aunt of the young King David), were the chiefs and leaders of the nation. They suddenly assembled a force, and attacked Balliol, who was feasting at Annan, in Dumfriesshire, where he had gone to keep his Christmas. On the night of the 16th of December, a body of horse under Sir Archibald, the young Earl of Moray, and Sir Simon Fraser, made a dash into the town to surprise him; and he escaped only by springing upon a horse without any saddle, and himself nearly without clothes, leaving behind him his brother Henry slain. His reign had lasted only about three months. He escaped to England and to Edward, who received him kindly. The Scottish borderers, elated with this success, rushed in numbers into England, there committing their usual excesses, and thus furnishing Edward with a valid plea for attacking Scotland, and inducing the Parliament to support him in it, which it had hesitated to do before. Edward marched northward with an army not numerous but well armed and disciplined, and in the month of May, 1333, invested Berwick, which was defended by Sir William Keith and a strong garrison.

Sir Andrew Murray, the regent, and the Knight of Liddesdale were taken prisoners in some of the skirmishes, and Sir Archibald (who became regent in the place of Murray) advanced with a large army to relieve Sir William Keith, who had engaged to surrender Berwick if not succoured by the 20th of July at sunrise. On the 19th, Douglas, after a severe march, arrived at an eminence called Halidon Hill, a mile or so north of Berwick. It had been the plan of Douglas to avoid a pitched battle with so powerful an enemy, and to endeavour to wear him out by a system of skirmishes and surprises, but the impatience of his soldiers overruled his caution. His army was drawn up on the slope of the hill, and Edward moved with all his force from Berwick to attack it. The ground, now fine, solid, and cultivated land, is represented then to have been extremely boggy. The Scots, however, dashed through the bogs, and then up the hill at the English, whose archers received them with a steady and murderous discharge of arrows. Douglas dismounted his heavy-armed cavalry to give firmness and impetus to the charge. The Earl of Ross led on the infantry, and King Edward at his side fought on foot in front of the battle. The Scots, though they fought desperately, yet, as, from the marshy ground, they could not come near the archers, and were out of breath with running up the hill, were thrown into confusion and gave way. The English cavalry under the king, but still more a body of Irish auxiliaries under Lord Darcy, pursued fiercely, giving little quarter. The slaughter was terrible, amounting to 30,000 Scots, and—if the accounts are to be believed—only one knight, one esquire, and thirteen private soldiers of the English fell. Nearly the whole of the Scottish nobles and officers were killed or made prisoners. Amongst the slain were Douglas, the regent himself, the Earls of Ross, Sutherland, and Monteith. Berwick surrendered, and Edward once more overran the country. He again seized and garrisoned the castles, again exacted public homage from Balliol, and compelled him to cede Berwick, Dunbar, Roxburgh, Edinburgh, and all the south-east counties of Scotland—the best and most fertile portion of the kingdom—which were declared to be made part and parcel of England. Such were the consequences of the fateful battle of Halidon Hill.

Edward left an army of Irish and English to support his wretched vassal in his fragment of a kingdom; but no sooner did he turn homewards than the indignant Scots drove Balliol from even that, and compelled him to seek refuge amongst the English garrisons of the south of Scotland. In the following years, 1335 and 1336, Edward was again obliged to make fresh expeditions into Scotland to support Balliol. Whenever the English king appeared the Scots retired to their mountain fastnesses, while Edward and his army overran the country with little opposition, burnt the houses, and laid waste the lands of those whom he styled rebels; but whenever he returned to England they came forth again, only the more embittered against the contemptible minion of the English king, the more determined against the tyranny of England. The regent, Sir Andrew Murray, pursued with untiring activity Balliol and his adherents. When Edward marched homeward to spend in London the Christmas of 1336, he left Scotland to all appearance perfectly prostrate, and flattered himself that it was completely subdued. Never was it further from such a condition. Only one spirit animated the Scottish nation—that of eternal resistance to the monarch who had inflicted on it such calamities, and set a slave on its throne. The Scots sought and obobtained assistance from France.

The diversion from this country, indeed, proved the salvation of Scotland; for now began to work the seeds that had been sown, the elements which had been infused into the English monarchy by Edward I.'s unprincipled abandonment of his engagement with Count Guy of Flanders for the marriage of his daughter Philippa with Edward of Carnarvon, and his alliance, for political purposes, with France. Edward now claimed the throne of France in right of his mother, and prepared to enforce that claim by arms. Hence came those long and bloody wars with France which produced hereditary enmity between the two nations, and the division of resources of England, in the vain attempt to subjugate France and Scotland, to which was due the ultimate loss of both countries. The ambition of Edward overshot itself. Had he confined his efforts to either of these great objects, he might have succeeded. By far the more important was the annexation of Scotland. It was a truly statesmanlike aim to make one consolidated kingdom of the island; but Edward, with all his talents, had no conception of the manner in which this was to be effected. If Scotland were to be won by arms, the whole of his forces should have been concentrated on that object alone. But this purpose never could be achieved by that means; it required a higher development of political wisdom and respect for international rights than had then been arrived at. Before we enter, however, on the narrative of the great French contest, we must mention a few facts which show the state to which Scotland was reduced at this time, and the invincible courage of the people, which called out singular displays of it, even by the women.

After the battle of Halidon Hill, throughout all Scotland only four castles and one small tower held out for David Bruce The castles of Lochleven, Kildrummie, and Dunbar, three out of the four, were distinguished by sieges which deserve notice. Lochleven Castle stood on an island, in the loch (or lake) of that name, at

Kinross, in Fifeshire. It was held by Alan Vipont, and was besieged by Sir John Stirling with an English army. As the island is low, Stirling thought he could draw out the garrison by blocking up the outlet to the loch. This was effected by throwing stones and earth into the small river Leven till a huge mound was raised. But Vipont, aware of the whole scheme, sent in the night a boat with four men, who cut through the mound, so that the confined waters broke forth with fury, and swept away the tents, baggage, and troops of the besiegers. The remains of this mound are pointed out to this day.

The castle of Kildrummie, which played so conspicuous a part in the war of Edward I., was now defended by Christiana Bruce, who, as we have said, was married to Sir Andrew Murray, now regent. It was one of the chief places of refuge for the patriots, and therefore was besieged by David Hastings, Earl of Atholl, one of the disinherited lords. Sir Andrew Murray determined to march to the relief of his wife. He called to his assistance the knight of Liddesdale, who had been in captivity with him in England, Sir Alexander Ramsay, of Dalwolsy, and the Earl of March. They could only raise 1,000 men, and Atholl had 3,000. But while on the march they were joined by one John Craig, a royalist of Scotland, who had been released by Atholl from confinement on promise of a large ransom. This ransom was due on the morrow, and Craig was unable or unwilling to pay it. He was glad to get rid of Atholl, and therefore undertook to lead them through the forest of Braemar, so as to take Atholl by surprise. On the way the people of the neighbourhood also joined them. Atholl was startled by suddenly perceiving the enemy upon him, but he disdained to fly. There was a small brook between him and the Scots, and the knight of Liddesdale keeping his men from crossing it, Atholl rushed over to attack them, when Liddesdale cried out, "Now is our time!" charged down the hill, bore Atholl and his forces back into the brook, and slew the earl and dispersed his force, thus entirely relieving the castle. This was called the Battle of Kiblene, and much noticed by the Scots as being fought on St. Andrew's Day, 1335.

Another of the most remarkable defences of these castles was that of Dunbar by the Countess of March. She was the daughter of the renowned Thomas Randolph, first Earl of Moray, of that family so gloriously associated with Scottish history, and from her complexion was called Black Agnes. The castle of Dunbar was built on a chain of rocks running into the sea, and its only connection with the mainland was well fortified. Montague, Earl of Salisbury, besieged it, and brought forward engines to throw stones, such as were used to batter down walls before the invention of cannon. One of these, with a strong roof to defend the assailants, standing up like a hog's back, was called the sow. When Black Agnes saw this engine advancing, she called out to the Earl of Salisbury, in derision—

"Beware Montagow,
For farrow shall thy sow."

She had ordered a huge stone to be set on the wall over the castle gate, and as soon as the sow came under this was let fall, by which means the roof of the machine was crushed in, and as the English soldiers ran out, they were shot down by a flight of arrows; whereupon the Black Agnes shouted out to Salisbury, "Behold the litter of English pigs!"

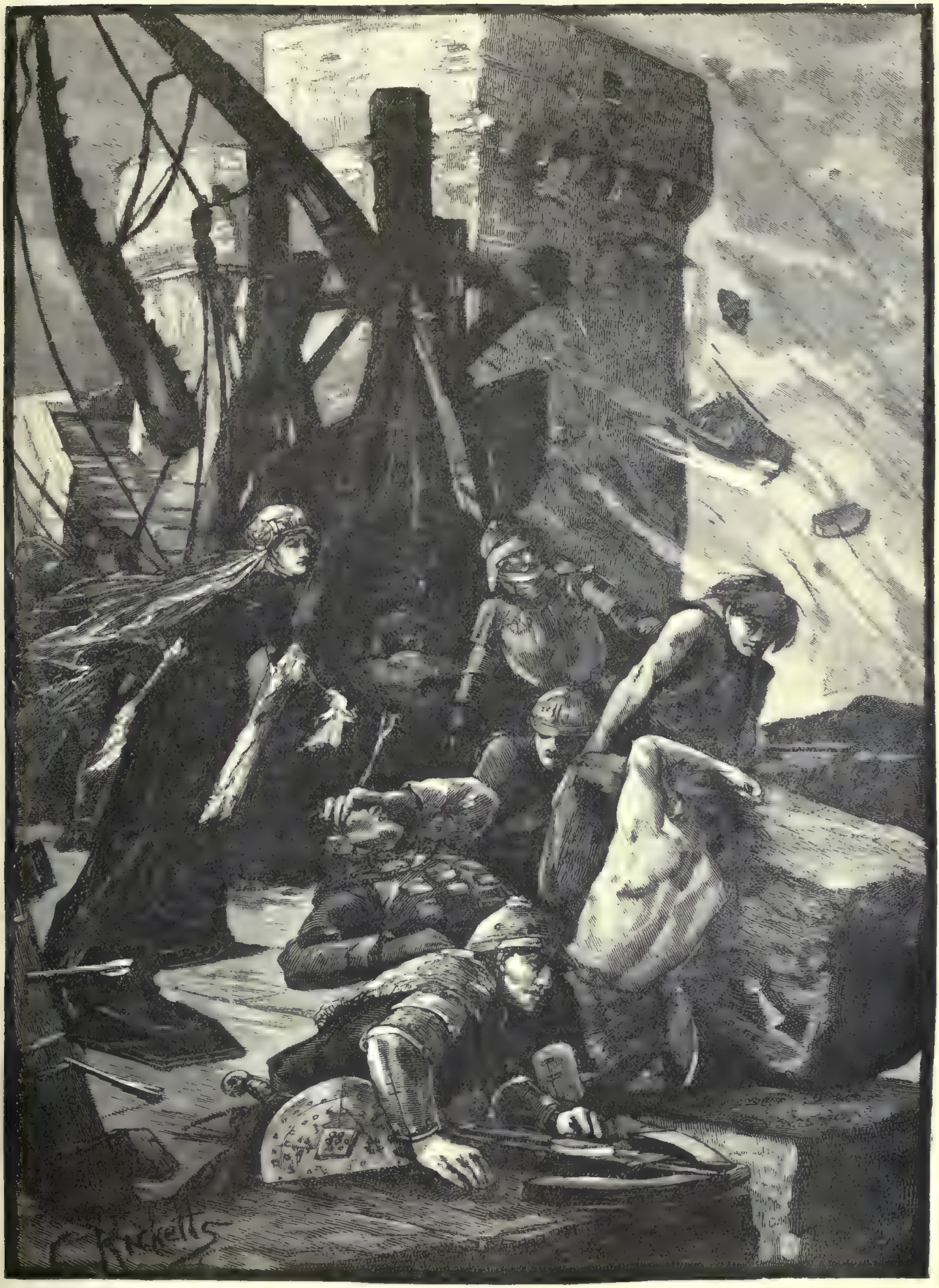
As the earl brought up fresh engines, and sent ponderous stones against her battlements, Black Agnes stood there, and wiped disdainfully the fragments of the broken battlements away with her handkerchief, as a matter of no moment. The earl riding near to reconnoitre, an arrow meant for him shot down a man at his side. "That," said the earl, "is one of my lady's love tokens. Black Agnes's love shafts pierce to the heart."

The countess next tried to inveigle the earl into her power. She sent a fellow into the English camp who pretended to betray the castle. The earl was caught by the trick, and came at midnight to the gates, which were to be opened to him by the traitor. Opened they were; but one John Copland, the earl's esquire, riding in before him, the guards were too quick; they dropped the portcullis, thinking the earl had entered, and so shut him out and betrayed their stratagem.

Black Agnes was at length relieved by Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalwolsy, who brought up forces both by sea and land; and the Scots, delighted with the spirit of the undaunted defender of the castle, celebrated her far and wide in their minstrel songs. One of these sufficiently portrays the character of this Scottish amazon:—

"That brawling, boisterous, Scottish wench,
Kept such a stir in towers and trench,
That, came I early or came I late,
I found Black Agnes in the gate."

The brave Sir Andrew Murray, the regent, died in 1338, while this contest was raging on all sides. He had discharged his office with the greatest spirit, patriotism, and wisdom, and his death was a severe loss to the country.



BLACK AGNES AT THE SIEGE OF DUNBAR CASTLE. (*See p. 400.*)

We are now arrived at a crisis in our history which marks at once the valour and the unscrupulous ambition of the English kings. There is no period of our annals in which the bravery of our countrymen assumed a more marvellous character, or in which it was displayed in a more unjust cause. Whenever we would boast of the military ascendency of the nation, we are sure to pronounce the words Creçy and Poitiers, but we are quite as certainly silent as to the political merits of the contest in which those names became celebrated. The invasions of France by Edward III. raised the martial glory of England to the highest pitch. There is nothing in the miracles of bravery done at Leuctra, Marathon, or Thermopylæ which can surpass those performed at Creçy, Poitiers, and on other occasions; but there the splendour of the parallel ends. The Greek battle-fields are sanctified by the imperishable renown of patriotism; those of England, at that period, are distinguished only by empty ambition and unwarrantable aggression. The Greeks fought and conquered for the very existence of their country and their liberties; the English, to crush those of an independent people. The wars commenced by Edward III. inflicted the most direful miseries on France, were continued for generations, and perpetuated a spirit of hostility between two great neighbour countries, which has been prolific of bloodshed, and most injurious to the progress of liberty and civilisation. The contest, as far as Edward III. was concerned, ended with a formal renunciation of his pretensions on the French crown, and in the acquisition of nothing but the town and district of Calais and Guisnes, destined to be lost, at a future day, with every other English fief and freehold in France.

The impolicy of Edward III. was equal to his spirit of aggression. He was not content to attempt the complete subjugation of Scotland, which his grandfather had invaded on pleas as empty as his own regarding France, and where, during the wars of three reigns, all the power and wealth of England had been put forth, only to prove that you may exterminate a brave people, but you cannot conquer them. While he was no nearer the real annexation of Scotland than his grandfather was the first day that he advanced beyond Berwick, he aspired to coerce a still more extensive empire. The real source of this great movement was merely military ambition.

Edward claimed to be the rightful heir to the crown of France through his mother. But it had always been held in that country that no female could succeed to the throne: no such occurrence had ever taken place. It was declared that this succession was prohibited by a clause in the Salic code—the code of an ancient tribe among the Franks. It is extremely doubtful if this code ever existed. On this presumption, however, the French nation had uniformly acted for nearly 1,000 years. The ancient Franks were too barbarous and turbulent to submit to a female ruler, and those who succeeded them steadily pursued the same practice, passing over female heirs, and placing on the throne men in their stead. The third race of French kings had transmitted the crown in this manner from Hugh Capet to Louis Hutin, for eleven generations; during which period no female, nor any male, even, who founded his title on a female, had been suffered to mount the throne.

Edward asserted that in England and in other countries such claim was always considered valid; that a son could and would succeed to his mother as well as to his father, if he had been born in the lifetime of his grandfather; and this view of the case was supported by the Government lawyers of England and some jurists abroad in English pay; but then the succession was not to take place in England, but in France, whose whole history and practice were opposed to it. The French maintained, and truly, that it was a fundamental law that no foreigner could reign in France; and that it was a chief object of this law to exclude the husbands and children of those princesses of France who married foreigners. To put the matter still further beyond question, the States General of France, in the time of Philip the Long, had passed a solemn and deliberate decree, declaring expressly that all females were for ever incapable of succeeding to the crown of France.

What right, then, had Edward to dictate to the French nation his own views in opposition to theirs? None whatever. By custom (the usage of nearly 1,000 years), and by express recent law, the principle of the French nation was clearly established. True, Edward was nearer in blood to the throne than Philip of Valois, who had now succeeded. He claimed from his mother, who was daughter of the fourth preceding king, Philip the Fair, and sister of the three preceding kings; while Philip of Valois was only cousin-german to the deceased king, Charles the Fair. But all this the laws and practice of France pronounced to amount to nothing. There was no passing legally over the fact that no female could succeed, or could transmit succession to her offspring; and, even if Edward had been able to prove a valid claim from the female side, he would only have proved his own exclusion; for the last three kings had all left daughters who were still alive, and who all stood before him in the order of succession.

In a legal point of view, then, Edward had not a leg to stand upon in this question, whether as a king of French or of English descent. Besides this, Edward, according to all the laws of honour and of nations then prevailing, had practically renounced any claims of the kind which he might pretend to. The French king had succeeded to the throne in 1329. The peers of the realm had declared the crown his. The Parliament of Paris, and after that the States General of the kingdom had confirmed their judgment; and not only all France, but all Europe had recognised him as rightful possessor of the throne. In 1331 the King of France called upon Edward to come over and do homage for his province of Guienne. Philip, who was an able man, and of years of experience, was too prudent to allow any one to retain the shadow of a claim against him. He lost no time in summoning so powerful a rival as the King of England to do that homage which would at once cut off any real claim, had it existed; and, on Edward seeming to hang back, was preparing to seize his fief by force of arms as forfeited. To have refused to yield this feudal homage would have been virtually to renounce his right to the province, or to involve him in a war with this monarch. Edward therefore went over to France, having first, as if that could have any legal effect, secretly in his council entered a protest against this act prejudicing his own claims on the French crown through his mother.

Edward was at that time about eighteen years of age, brave and ambitious. He was attended by a splendid retinue of peers and knights, and was met by the King of France with a similarly imposing train. The act of homage was publicly performed in the cathedral of Amiens. Edward appeared in a robe of crimson velvet, embroidered with leopards of gold. He came wearing his armour, girt with his sword, and with his golden spurs of knighthood on his heels. Philip of France received him seated in a chair of state, before which was placed a cushion for the king of England to kneel upon. No doubt, as this act implied vassalage, so far as any lands in France were concerned, every precaution was taken that so powerful a monarch of a neighbouring nation, and a suspected rival, should make no equivocal submission. Edward, on his part, was careful to give none but the smallest and most indispensable tokens of dependence, and refused to kneel. On this the Grand Chamberlain of France insisted that he should kneel, and that he should perform his homage by laying aside his regal ornaments, his sword, girdle, and spurs. Edward's anger at this humiliating demand before the assembled chivalry and high-born ladies of France was excessive; but no remonstrance could move the Grand Chamberlain, and he was obliged to kneel bare-headed and stripped of all the marks of his royal rank. His indignation at this proceeding whetted his enmity against Philip of Valois, and led in no trifling degree to his future terrible invasions of his kingdom. Yet it was not till 1336, five years afterwards, and seven after Philip had sat quietly on his throne, that he openly declared the superiority of his own claims to it, and his determination to assert them.

The King of England had just cause of quarrel with the King of France. The latter had repeatedly sent money and men to the aid of the Scots, and to pave the way for the return of the young king and queen, who were exiles in France. But the immediate instigator of Edward's enterprise was the brother-in-law of Philip, Robert of Artois, who had incurred the king's anger, and had fled the country in disguise. This Robert, Count of Artois, was a man of fiery temper, and unprincipled. He had married the king's sister; and, being in high favour with him, hoped to prevail upon him to reverse the acts of Philip the Fair, which had prevented his succession to the earldom of Artois. Robert was undoubtedly the male heir; but his aunt Matilda being married to Otho, Duke of Burgundy, and his two daughters to two sons of Philip the Fair, that monarch adjudged the county of Artois to the heir female, and this judgment was confirmed by Philip the Long. The count had clearly just cause of complaint, and on the death of Charles the Fair he zealously supported the claims of Philip of Valois, and hoped, from the services which he then rendered, as well as from his alliance by marriage, that the king would now reverse this settlement of the county of Artois in his favour. Philip, however, though he held the count in the highest esteem, and consulted him on all occasions of state, yet declined to reverse the decisions of his two predecessors.

But this by no means contented Robert of Artois. He forged a will, as that of his grandfather,

PORCH OF THE GOLDEN VIRGIN: AMIENS CATHEDRAL.

settling the county upon him, and presented it to the king. Philip, who instantly recognised the forgery, denounced so mean and criminal an act in no measured terms; and the count retired, muttering that he who placed the crown on Philip's head knew how to take it off again. These words being reported to Philip, he appeared to have lost all command of himself: he condemned the count for forgery, degraded him from all honours and offices, confiscated his property, and banished him from France. His rage did not stop there. He seized and imprisoned the count's wife, though his own sister, on pretence of her cognizance of the fraud; burnt at the stake a woman of the house of Bethune, as the actual framer of the deed, and as having practised by sorcery against the king's life. He still pursued the fugitive count, by interfering to prevent his stay in Brabant, where he had taken refuge.

However righteous might be this indignation, it was far from politic, for Robert of Artois was thus driven into the arms of Edward of England. He exerted all his art and persuasion with Edward to assert his title to the crown of France. The king and Robert were united by no common principle, except that of professed resentment against the King of France, and of having just claims in his country; though one was excluded by male heirship and the other by female. The King of France, sensible of the mischief the count might create in the English court against him, called upon Edward to expel him from the country, and threatened, in case of refusal, to fall upon Guienne. This only added to the anger of Edward and to the ostensible motives of invasion. The King of France issued a sentence of felony and attainder against the count and against every vassal of his crown who harboured him. Edward retorted the protection which he had given to his enemy, the King of Scots, and commenced active measures for invading France. He made alliances with various princes of the Netherlands and Germany; his father-in-law, the Count of Hainault, was his active agent, and very soon were engaged the Duke of Brabant, the Duke of Gueldres, the Archbishop of Cologne, the Marquis of Juliers, the Count of Namur, and the people of Flanders. The Count of Flanders adhered to Philip, who also engaged the Kings of Navarre and Bohemia, the Dukes of Brittany, Austria, and Louvain, the Palatine of the Rhine, and some other princes of Germany.

Edward expected more efficient aid from the Flemings than from any other of his allies; they had grown rich and considerable through trade, and had dealings with England, whence they received wool, and where they found good customers for their manufactures. They were the first people in the northern countries of Europe who had made progress in the arts and in manufactures, and their self-earned affluence had the usual effect of inspiring them with a spirit of independence. They had resisted and thrown off the oppression of their nobles, and expelled the Count, who was not disposed to consent to their bold assumptions. A wealthy brewer, Jacob van Artevelde, a sort of Cromwell of the Netherlands, had, by the force of his character, not only led them on, but placed himself at their head, and now exercised a power equal to that of any sovereign. He entered heartily into Edward's views, and inspired his countrymen with them, who had a great dislike to Philip of France, because he had supported their Count against them. He invited Edward to Flanders, and promised him vigorous aid.

Edward, before embarking in this serious undertaking, called for the advice of his Parliament, and solicited its support, which was promptly given. It voted him 20,000 sacks of wool, the very commodity of all others acceptable to the Flemings, and of the supposed value of £100,000. With the price of this wool he could also pay his German allies. Besides this grant, he levied a heavy contribution on the tin of Cornwall, pawned the jewels of the crown, and raised money by all possible means—amongst others, seizing on the property of the Lombards, who now exercised the trade of money-lending, formerly carried on by the Jews. With a numerous fleet, he set sail from Orwell, in Suffolk, on the 15th of July, 1338, attended by a considerable body of English troops and some of his nobility.

On landing at Antwerp he found it difficult to move his various allies, who, like Continental allies in all ages, were much fonder of receiving their subsidies than of fighting. The Germans demurred to advance against France except by authority of the Emperor of Germany, who, therefore, conferred on Edward the title of vicar of the empire. The Flemings, who were vassals of France, had like scruples to combat, which were eventually overcome by Edward assuming, at the instigation of Van Artevelde, the style of King of France, and, under plea of the right it conferred, claiming their aid in deposing Philip of Valois as the usurper of his realm.

By this act Edward effected that breach between England and France which took so many ages to heal, and which was the spring of incalculable miseries to both countries. Till then, the nobility, coming originally from Normandy, were to be found almost as frequently at the English court as at that of France, and the two countries seemed little different from the wide empire of one people under two or more sovereigns. This step was not taken by Edward without misgivings and reluctance; and no sooner was it made than his allies began to show symptoms of backwardness. The Duke of Brabant, the most powerful amongst the princes, seemed inclined to withdraw from his alliance, and was only held to his engagements by fresh privileges of trade being granted to his subjects, and a marriage contracted between the Black Prince and his daughter. To move the Germans, Edward promised an attack on Cambray, a city of the empire which Philip had seized upon, or, in other words, to pay them for allowing him to fight their own battles. Finding that the attempt was useless, he then led his allies to the frontiers of France, where many of them threw off all pretence of doing that for which they had been so liberally paid, and refused to fight against France. Amongst these were the Count of Namur and the Count of Hainault, Edward's own brother-in-law (the old count being dead), who now discovered that they were vassals of France, and could not possibly direct their arms against it. We do not read that on this discovery they refunded the money they had pocketed for this very purpose.

Deserted by these mercenaries, Edward, however, still advanced, and entered France, encamping at Vironfosse, near Capelle, with 50,000 men, chiefly foreigners. Philip came against him with an army of nearly twice that number, consisting of his own subjects, and having the advantage of being accompanied, blessed, and encouraged by the Pope—a most inspiriting circumstance in that age. Benedict XII. lived then at Avignon, and was a dependent on France, besides being incensed at Edward making an alliance with the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, who lay under the ban of his excommunication. Edward marched as far as Péronne and St. Quentin, burning the villages and laying waste the country. The French king, however, avoided hazarding an engagement, and Edward, having made a detour by the Ardennes, found his armies exhausted, and returned to Ghent. There Benedict endeavoured to negotiate a peace between the two monarchs; but Edward, despite the utter failure of his campaign, refused to listen to it. Yet his situation was pitiable, and his feelings could be by no means enviable. He had consumed and, indeed, anticipated, his whole year's revenue; he had seized largely on the substance of his subjects, had pawned everything belonging to himself and his queen, and was now in a manner in pawn himself, for he had incurred debts to his miserable, useless allies to the amount of £300,000. They would not allow him to return to England even to raise fresh resources, without leaving his queen behind, as a pledge of his return. Thus all his grand undertaking had ended in complete failure; nothing had been done, and only formidable engagements had been incurred.

In February, 1340, he managed to get across to England, where nothing but difficulties and mortifications awaited him. He had sent over during the campaign to obtain fresh supplies from Parliament through his son, whom he had left guardian. Parliament offered to grant him 30,000 more sacks of wool, but then they demanded in return that the king should make considerable abatements both of royal licence and prerogative. The king had caused sheriffs and other placemen to be elected into Parliament to increase his facility of obtaining grants. This stretch of power the Parliament very properly insisted should cease, and to that the king consented; but they went on next to demand that the ancient privileges of purveyance and levying of feudal aids, for knighting the king's eldest son and marrying his eldest daughter, should be abolished. There the king demurred; these were his ancient rights, and not all his necessities, and the temptation of the 30,000 sacks of wool, could induce him to sacrifice them. When he appeared in person, he obtained better terms, but not without a struggle. Parliament now called for a confirmation of the two charters, which the kings of those ages were always breaking, and which Edward had to confirm fifteen times in the course of his reign. This, therefore, he probably considered no great matter; but Parliament also asked for a confirmation of the privileges of boroughs, a pardon for old debts and offences, and some reforms in the administration of the common law. In return for these concessions, it offered him the liberal supplies of a ninth fleece, lamb, and sheep, and the same of the movables of the burgesses; as well as a duty of forty shillings on each last of leather, on each sack of wool, and on each 300 sheepskins exported, for two years; and because these would come in too slowly, they gave him 20,000 sacks of wool at once, to be deducted from these taxes. Parliament also took a very prudent precaution, in affording him the sinews of war, to protest against the assumption of the title of King of France, declaring that they owed him no obeisance as King of France, and that the kingdoms must for ever remain separate and independent of each other.

While the king was making these preparations for the renewal of the war, Philip of France was using strenuous exertions to collect a fleet powerful enough to prevent his landing. He had sought this aid from the Genoese, at that time the great maritime power; as we shall soon find that he had also employed them, to a large extent, as archers in his army. The fleet numbered 400 sail, manned by Genoese sailors, and containing an army of 40,000 men; that is, about 100 men on an average to a vessel; from which we may form some idea of the smallness of the ships of those times. Edward, informed of this, collected also a fleet, with which, though consisting of only 240 sail, he was impatient to set out and engage that of his rival. His council advised him to wait till he had a force more equal; but Edward set out on the 22nd of June, many English ladies going over in other vessels to pay their respects to the queen. On the 24th the English fleet was off the harbour of Sluys, in Flanders, and there found the French fleet lying to prevent their disembarkation. Their masts and streamers, says Froissart, appeared like a wood. When Edward saw them, he exclaimed, "Ha! I have long desired to fight the French, and now I will do it, by the grace of God and St. George!"

The next morning, having placed the vessels bearing the ladies at such a distance that they might see the battle in safety, Edward, with the instinctive address of a British naval captain, manœuvred so as to get the wind of the enemy. This movement, being mistaken by the French for a sign of fear in the king, induced them to come pouring out of the harbour; by which Edward gained another object which he sought, that of having them more in his power of attack. The battle commenced at ten in the morning, and lasted nine hours. During the fight the Genoese showered in upon the English their arrows from their deadly cross-bows; but they were briskly answered by the long bows of the English; and when all the arrows were spent, they seized each others' ships with grappling irons and chains, and the men-at-arms fought hand to hand with swords and axes, as if on land. The English, fighting in the presence and under the daring example of their king, displayed the utmost courage, and finally victory decided for them. They took or destroyed nearly the whole of the French fleet. Fifteen thousand of the enemy—some authors say more—were killed, or perished in the sea. To make the catastrophe the more complete, the Flemings, seeing the battle incline for the English, rushed down to the shore in great numbers, and cut off the retreat of the French, making terrible slaughter amongst them. Edward then accomplished his landing with the utmost *éclat*, inspiring his allies with some temporary spirit. So terrible was the defeat of the French that none durst breathe a syllable of it in the hearing of Philip; and it was made known to him only by the Court jester. Some one speaking of the English, "Bah!" said the fool, "the English are but cowards." "Why so?" said the king. "Because," added the fool, "they did not dare the other day at Sluys to leap into the sea from their ships like the French and Normans."

Edward had lost about 4,000 men himself in the battle, but still he had no lack of followers. The splendour of this victory, and the fame of the large sums which he had brought with him, gathered his allies about him like swarms of locusts. Nearly 200,000 men advanced with him towards the French frontiers, but achieved nothing of consequence. Of these, 50,000, under Robert of Artois, laid siege to St. Omer. A single sally of the governor was enough to squander these untutored forces, and, notwithstanding the abilities of Robert of Artois, they could never again be collected. Edward invested Tournay, which was defended by a strong garrison; and when reduced to distress, Philip appeared with a large army, but avoided coming to action. Edward, provoked at this caution, sent him a challenge to single combat, which he declined. While the armies lay in this position, and Edward had wasted ten weeks, effecting nothing, and paying his numerous army of useless allies, Jane, Countess of Hainault, sister to Philip and mother-in-law of Edward, came forward, as a mediatrix between them. She had retired from the world to a convent, but this destructive quarrel between persons so near to her called her forth to endeavour to reconcile them. Her exertions were seconded by the Pope and cardinals; but all that they could effect was a truce for one year.

Philip managed soon after to win over the Emperor of Germany, who revoked Edward's title of imperial vicar, and his other allies rapidly withdrew as his money failed. He was now harassed by them as most importunate creditors, and was glad to steal away to England, where he arrived in the worst of humours. He had involved himself deeply in debt, and had achieved nothing but his naval victory. The anger which was excited by his foreign creditors fell on his subjects at home. Landing unexpectedly, he found the Tower very negligently guarded, and he immediately committed the constable and all in charge of it to prison. He then let his vengeance fall on the officers of the revenue, and collectors of the taxes, who had so greatly failed him in his need. Sir John St. Paul, keeper of the privy seal, Sir John Stonore, chief justice, and Andrew Aubrey, Mayor of London, were displaced and imprisoned.

as were also the Bishops of Chichester and Lichfield, the Chancellor and Treasurer. Stratford, Archbishop of Canterbury, to whom the charge of collecting the new taxes had chiefly been entrusted, also fell under his displeasure; but he assumed an attitude of defiance, threatening excommunication against any one daring to execute these illegal arrests, as he termed them, and appealed to Magna Charta in behalf of himself and brethren. The king appointed Commissioners to inquire into the guilt of all concerned. He issued a proclamation, accusing the archbishop of having embezzled or misapplied the taxes intended for the king's use. The archbishop denied the charge, and supported by the clergy in a regular combination against the king, accused him of arbitrary acts and infringements of the constitution, telling him that the favour of the Church was higher than that of the state, inasmuch as the priests had to answer at the Divine tribunal for the conduct of kings themselves, and reminding him that prelates before then had cited emperors to their seats of judgment. This dispute was carried on with great heat on both sides; but the king, driven by the clamours of his creditors, was obliged to call a Parliament; and though he omitted to summon Stratford and the other bishops, the archbishop appeared before the gates arrayed in full pontificals, with crozier in hand, and attended by an imposing train of bishops and priests. He demanded admittance as the highest peer in the realm; but it was not till Edward had kept him there two days that he admitted him, and even became reconciled to him.

The king's necessities, no doubt, made him give way, for he had difficulties sufficient without the opposition of the clergy. He was overwhelmed with debts, for which he was paying ruinous interest, and was worried both by his foreign and domestic creditors. His attempts on France, which had brought him into this humiliating condition, had proved utter failures. Parliament declined to assist him, except on its usual conditions of fresh restrictions on his power. The barons claimed that peers should only be tried by peers; they called for a new subscription of the Great Charter; they demanded that no offices should be filled, except by the advice of his Council; and that at the commencement of every session he should resume all offices, in order to inquire into their faithful discharge. Edward, as was his wont, signed all these and other demands, obtained his grant of 20,000 more sacks of wool, and then declared that the conditions to which he had agreed were void, because they had been extorted.

It was hoped that the truce which had been entered into between France and England might be succeeded by a peace. Edward's total want of success might naturally have been expected to incline him to it; but he claimed exemption from rendering homage for Guienne, and demanded that Philip should cease to support the King of Scots against him. Neither of these points would Philip yield, when an event took place which renewed the war with fresh spirit, and with the most wonderful change of fortune.

This event was the disputed succession to the dukedom of Brittany. John III., duke of that province, died in April, 1341. He had no children, but desiring that his niece Jane, the daughter of his younger but deceased brother Guy, Count of Penthièvre, should succeed him, he had married her to Charles of Blois, nephew of the King of France. Before doing this, he had assembled the states of Brittany, which had fully assented; all his vassals, and amongst them John de Montfort, the son of his also deceased brother Arthur. But, though John de Montfort had not dared to oppose the will of his uncle during his lifetime, no sooner was he dead than he asserted his own higher claim to the duchy. He was, in fact, the true heir male. While Charles of Blois was at the court of France, soliciting the investiture of the duchy, John de Montfort rode at once to Nantes, took possession of the late duke's house and treasures, prevailed on the chief barons and bishops to recognise his right, and made himself master of Brest, Rennes, Hennebont, and other towns and fortresses.

De Montfort, convinced that Philip would take part with his own kinsman, Charles of Blois, hastened to England, where he did homage to Edward, as the rightful king of France, for the duchy of Brittany, and proposed an alliance for the mutual maintenance of their claims in France. Edward instantly perceived the immense advantages which this new connection would give to his designs on that kingdom. All his enthusiasm for its conquest revived; and this feeling was fanned into flame by Robert of Artois. Edward closed with the offer, and De Montfort returned to Brittany to put it into a state of complete defence. He was speedily summoned to Paris to appear before the peers of France, called by the king to decide this great cause. De Montfort boldly went; but, finding himself charged with the offence of doing homage to Edward of England as his superior, he took just alarm, and made his escape from the city.

The Peers, as might have been expected, adjudged the duchy to Charles of Blois, declaring that John de Montfort had forfeited whatever claim he might have by his treasonable homage to the King of England. Philip ordered his eldest son to march into Brittany at the head of an army, to assist Charles of Blois to expel John de Mantfort. Under him, but the actual commander of the forces, was a celebrated warrior, Louis de la Cerda, commonly called Don Louis of Spain; and by his able conduct Nantes was speedily recovered, and De Montfort taken prisoner, sent to Paris, and confined in the Louvre, where he long remained. By this event the claims of De Montfort, and the new hopes of Edward, appeared to be extinguished. Charles of Blois considered the war at an end, took possession of Nantes and other towns, and seemed to have before him a very easy business to establish himself in the duchy. But all parties were surprised by a new incident, which soon gave a more determined character to the contest. Jane, the wife of De Montfort, sister to the Count of Flanders, was in Rennes when her husband was made prisoner at Nantes. She instantly displayed the spirit of a great woman, and instead of weakly yielding to grief or fear, she immediately assembled the people of Rennes, presented her infant son to them, recommending him to their protection as the last remaining hope of their country, and declared her resolve to defend the duchy to the last against the usurper. She reminded them of the alliance of England, and promised them certain success. The audience, struck with wonder at her courage, and moved to tears by her appeal, vowed to stand by her to the death, and the same spirit animated all the other towns of Brittany. The brave lady—who, according to Froissart "had the courage of a man and the heart of a lion"—went from place to place rousing the people, encouraging the garrisons, and seeing that they were well provisioned and placed in a condition of the greatest strength. Finding that she could not hold Rennes against Charles of Blois and the French army, she shut herself up in Hennebont, and awaited succour from England. She

THE COUNTESS DE MONTFORT INCITING THE PEOPLE OF RENNES TO RESIST THE FRENCH KING. (*See p.* 409.)

despatched to Edward fresh information of her situation, and with it her son, to be there in a place of safety, and, as it were, a pledge to the King of England of her fixed determination to defend her cause to the last.

Charles of Blois speedily sat down before Hennebont, with a great army of French, Bretons, Spaniards, and Genoese, and trusted to take the countess prisoner, and so put a finish to the war. But the countess, inspiriting everybody by her words and example, made a stout defence. She herself put on armour, and rode through the streets on a noble charger, exhorting the citizens to show themselves valiant. She was at every post of danger, at the gates or on the walls, where the enemy's arrows fell thickest. The very women, fired by her bravery, cut short their gowns, that they might be the more active, and, tearing up the pavement of the streets, carried the stones to the walls, or prepared pots of quicklime and other missiles to discharge on the besiegers. Women of all ranks were seen engaged in these labours without distinction, and the countess continually headed sorties on the enemy. One day, during a long and desperate assault, watching its progress from the walls, she perceived that Charles of Blois had directed such a force against the city that a part of his camp was quite deserted. She instantly dismounted, called together a body of 300 brave knights and esquires, and, issuing from a gate opposite to that where the French were so intently engaged, she led them, under cover of some woods and hills, to the unguarded camp, upon which they fell, setting fire to the tents, baggage, and magazines, and doing immense mischief. When the besiegers saw their own quarters in flames, they cried "Treason! treason!" and rushed to the defence. The brave countess, seeing that her retreat was cut off, instantly adapted her plan, bidding her followers to disband and make their way as they could to Brest. The countess herself galloped off, but was hotly pursued by Don Louis of Spain, as vindictive as he was brave, who came so near her as to kill several of her followers. The countess however, made good her rendezvous with her followers, and speedily was on her way back, at the head, not of 300, but of 500 men. Taking refuge in the castle of Auray, and watching their opportunity, they left the castle at midnight, reached the neighbourhood of Hennebont at sunrise, and, darting past the astonished besiegers, effected an entrance into the city on the sixth day after they had left it. This gallant and successful action on the part of the countess greatly amazed Charles of Blois and his army, and encouraged her own people, who received her with trumpets sounding an every demonstration of triumph.

Still the French pressed on, and the English succours, daily and hourly looked for, did not arrive. The besiegers had already made several breaches in the walls; provisions were growing scarce; the garrison was overwhelmed with fatigue and watching; and, still worse, the Bishop of Laon, a friend of Charles of Blois, was in the city, under the double character of an ecclesiastic and an ambassador, and was using all his endeavours to induce the countess to yield. His words had the worst effect on the inhabitants. He was continually going about describing the horrors attending a city given up to pillage, and recommending a capitulation. It was surprising that the countess, so quick to perceive her interests in other respects, should have tolerated his mischievous presence there. At length, however, he prevailed on her followers to propose a surrender. The brave countess implored them to wait, assuring them that the English succours must arrive; but the bishop now pressed his advantage; he called the Breton lords together again the next day, and, keeping up his communications with the besiegers without, they drew nearer, with Charles of Blois at their head, in readiness to take possession. The countess, in the greatest anxiety, kept a constant look-out from a tower commanding a view of the sea, and at the very moment when the traitorous Bishop of Laon was about to make over the city, she descried a large squadron steering towards Hennebont. She immediately shouted—"Behold the Red Cross! the English succours! No capitulation!" The people of the town all rushed to the ramparts to see the joyful sight. It was, indeed, the English fleet, which had been detained at sea forty days by contrary winds, but now was coming on with full sail.

All thoughts of surrender, of course, were abandoned; the disappointed bishop was dismissed to his equally disappointed master; and the English forces, consisting of 6,000 archers, and a body of heavy-armed cavalry, under Sir Walter Manny, a Flemish knight, one of the greatest captains of the age, in Edward's service, landing, drove the besiegers back, and entered the town amid the joyful acclamations of the inhabitants. The delighted countess received her deliverers with every courtesy. She admitted the knights and captains into her own castle, decorated with her finest tapestry, and dined herself at table with them. The next day, after dinner, Sir Walter Manny proposed to make a sally, and break down the battering rams of the French. The challenge was enthusiastically answered by all the knights and warriors present. They united and rushed forth with 300 archers, charged the French furiously, took and broke to pieces the engines of the siege, drove back the besiegers, and, following up their advantage, fell on the camp, and set fire to it, killing many of the enemy. The countess was so overjoyed at this signal triumph that, on the return of Sir Walter to the city, she hastened to receive him, and, says Froissart, kissed him and his companions twice or thrice, "like a valiant lady."

The siege was raised, and the French removed the war to Lower Brittany. Don Louis of Spain went along the coast attended by a strong force of Spaniards and Genoese, and indulged his disposition for cruelty by burning Guérande, and sacking the whole country as far as Quimperlé. Sir Walter, informed of this, pursued Don Louis with all speed, taking ship with 3,000 archers, and a sufficient proportion of men-at-arms. He came up with him at Quimperlé, seized his fleet and all his booty in the harbour, fell upon Don Louis's force, killed his brother Don Alphonso, severely wounded Don Louis himself, who hurriedly escaped in a skiff, and totally destroyed or dispersed his followers.

Brilliant as these actions were, the forces sent to support the countess were far too inadequate to this object. Don Louis, smarting under this defeat, had again joined Charles of Blois, and together they returned to invest Hennebont, against which they reared sixteen engines of the largest size, with which they dreadfully battered and shook the walls The undaunted countess, however, defended the ramparts with woolsacks, and jeered the assailants by asking them why they did not bring up their army from Quimperlé. Don Louis, against whom this was aimed, burned for revenge, and endeavoured to obtain it in a most dastardly and unknightly manner. Amongst the prisoners of Charles of Blois were two gallant Englishmen, Sir John Butler and Sir Matthew Trelawny. These brave men, out of spite to the English, who had so signally defeated him, Don Louis demanded to be delivered up to him, that he might put them to death in sight of the whole army and city. Charles, who revolted at so dishonourable a proposal, refused; but on Don Louis declaring that he would renounce the cause of Charles for ever, they were given up Don Louis had them bound ready, and declared that after dinner he would strike off their heads under the city walls. No persuasions of his knights could divert him from his savage purpose. But Sir Walter Manny hearing of it, made a sally, in which Sir Aimery of Clisson, a Breton knight, attacking the French in front, and Sir Walter, issuing from a private postern, and falling on the camp, found the two condemned knights, and rescued them. The French were soon after compelled to raise the siege, and concluded a truce with the countess till the following May, 1343.

This interval the Countess of Montfort employed in a voyage to England, soliciting fresh forces, which were despatched in forty-six vessels, under Robert of Artois. The countess sailed with them; and off Guernsey they encountered a French fleet of thirty-two ships, much larger and better than the English ones, commanded by the redoubtable Don Louis of Spain, and manned by 1,000 men-at-arms, and 3,000 Genoese crossbowmen. The engagement was very fierce, the countess in full armour taking the deck, and fighting sword in hand. The battle was interrupted by night, accompanied by a terrible tempest. The English fleet, however, escaped into Hennebont. Soon after landing they took Vannes by surprise, and then they divided their forces; Sir Walter Manny and the countess defending Hennebont, and the Earls of Salisbury and Pembroke attacked Rennes, leaving Robert of Artois in Vannes. Here he was suddenly surrounded by 12,000 French troops under Oliver de Clisson and De Beaumanoir, who took the city by storm. Robert of Artois narrowly escaped, but so severely wounded that he took shipping for England, where he soon died. So perished a man who more than any other had caused this bloody war. Edward III. was so affected by his loss, for he was greatly attached to him, that he vowed to avenge his death; and accordingly he crossed the sea to Morbihan, near Vannes, with an army of 12,000 men, in October of that year.

Edward marched to Rennes and Nantes, destroying the country as he went, and laying siege to Vannes, Rennes, and Nantes all at once. By dividing his forces he failed in all his attempts, for Charles of Blois had obtained an army from the King of France of 40,000 men under the Duke of Normandy. His eldest son Edward, on the approach of this formidable force, entrenched himself before Vannes, and the Duke of Normandy sat down at a short distance from him, and entrenched himself likewise in his camp. Here the two forces lay for some weeks, neither venturing to strike the first blow; and the Pope now stepped in by his legates, and persuaded them to sign a truce for three years and eight months. Edward having secured honourable terms for himself and allies, returned home.

But the truce was by no means observed by either side. The different parties were become so exasperated against each other that they went on fighting as though there were no truce at all. Philip of France was bound by one of its conditions to liberate John de Montfort; but he still kept him in prison, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the Pope, and persevered in his attacks on Brittany, which the countess defended with her accustomed spirit. Several knights of distinction were in treaty to pass over to the side of De Montfort, and Philip making the discovery, lured them to a grand tournament, and had their heads struck off in the centre of the Halles, or market-place at Pons. Amongst these were the brave knight Oliver de Clisson, already mentioned. John de Montauban and many others there and in Normandy were as ruthlessly dealt with. This perfidious and sanguinary conduct produced a feeling of horror everywhere, and such of the Breton knights as had fought for Charles of Blois went over to the Countess de Montfort. Foremost amongst the malcontents thus created was Jane de Belville, the widow of the murdered Oliver de Clisson, who became a determined enemy, and who, carrying her son to the Countess de Montfort to be brought up with hers, became indefatigable in her pursuit of vengeance on the French. It was a remarkable circumstance that these wars produced three women, all named Jane, the wives of Charles of Blois, of De Montfort, and of De Clisson, who displayed the most extraordinary spirit, each rivalling the other in their heroic actions.

This contempt of the truce roused the English nation to support the king in the continuance of the war. The Parliament granted him liberal supplies, and he sent over his near kinsman, the Earl of Derby, son of the Earl of Lancaster, with an army to protect Guienne, and give assistance to the Countess de Montfort. The Earl of Derby was a nobleman of great ability and integrity of character, distinguished both for humanity and bravery. He very soon placed Guienne in a posture of strong defence, and then made a bold advance into the enemy's country. He attacked and defeated the Count de l'Isle at Bergerac, reduced a great part of Périgord, and took the strong castle of Auberoche in Gascony. This castle was again attempted by De l'Isle, being left only with a weak garrison; but a spy whom Derby had in the French camp apprised the earl of its situation. He advanced into the neighbourhood with 1,000 cavalry, and found the castle invested by 10,000 or 12,000 men. The earl had sent to the Earl of Pembroke at Bergerac to meet him with a large force, but he had not come up. To ordinary men the idea of attacking the French army of 10,000 or more with his 1,000 would have appeared insane; but the earl had with him the able commanders, Sir Walter Manny, Lord Ferrars, Sir Richard Hastings, and others, and, taking advantage of a wood, they came suddenly on the French camp as the soldiers were cooking their suppers. Darting amongst them with loud shouts of "A Derby! a Derby!" the sudden apparition of the enemy threw the whole French host into such confusion that a total rout took place, and the Count de l'Isle, with nine earls and viscounts, and nearly all the barons, knights, and squires of the army were taken.

This terminated the campaign of Lord Derby for 1345; and the next year, when he became Earl of Lancaster through the death of his father, he pursued his victories, and took strong towns and fortresses. His successes were favoured by the state of France at that time, where the exhausted finances led Philip to debase the coin and lay a heavy impost on salt, both of which circumstances excited great disaffection and disorder in the kingdom. At length the Duke of Normandy, Philip's eldest son, attended by the Duke of Burgundy and other powerful nobles, led a large army to the frontiers of Guienne, and compelled Lancaster to stand on the defensive, his forces being much inferior in number.

While these events were taking place, Edward III. was earnestly at work at home, endeavouring to organise an efficient scheme for achieving something more than the defence of Guienne or the aid of Brittany: namely, his grand dream of the total conquest of France. His first attempt was to secure the co-operation of his old friend Jacob van Artevelde, the brewer of Ghent. He had the daring to propose that his son, the Black Prince, should be offered to the people of Flanders in lieu of their old Count, who had gone over to the French interest. But this scheme cost the stout old Artevelde his life. No sooner was the overture made than the burgesses took alarm at it, and lost their faith in Van Artevelde as a patriot.

Bruges and Ypres were brought over by the promised advantages of trade with England, but his own town of Ghent broke out into open insurrection. When he rode into the city, attended by a body of Welsh, whom Edward had sent, he was received with the most hostile looks and expressions. He hastened to his house, and endeavoured by a speech from an upper window to appease the incensed people; but it was in vain. They broke into his house, and murdered him on the spot (July 9th, 1345). The man who had reigned like a king, on the strength of his reputed patriotism, now fell by the hand of a saddler, and amid the execrations of the mob, as a traitor. Hope of assistance was gone for Edward in that quarter.

THE CHURCH OF ST. ETIENNE: CAEN.

He was equally unfortunate in Hainault. His brother-in-law, the young Count of Hainault, was killed also in a revolt of the Frieslanders; and his uncle, the well-known John of Hainault, so long allied with England, went over to the French on the plea that Edward had not duly estimated or rewarded his services. About the same time, too, John de Montfort, so long a captive in Paris, was liberated, but died of a fever before

Quimperlé. All hope appeared closed on the side of the Netherlands and of Brittany; but a new light sprang up in an unexpected quarter, giving an entirely new turn to his enterprise.

Sir Godfrey de Harcourt, Lord of Saint Sauveur, and brother of John, Count of Harcourt, long in the service of England, had stood high in the favour of Philip of France; but having offended him by resisting one of his arbitrary acts, he had a narrow escape of sharing the fate of Oliver de Clisson. He fled to England, and, like his predecessor, Robert of Artois, he exerted all his talent to persuade the king to invade France on the side of Normandy, Sir Godfrey's own country, and where, of course, lay his forfeited estates. He represented to Edward that it was one of the most fertile and beautiful provinces of France—abounded with wealth, for it had not been the scene of war for two centuries; that the numerous and opulent towns had scarcely any fortifications, and were now deserted by the nobility and their vassals, who were with the Duke of Normandy in Gascony. He reminded Edward that it was an ancient possession of England, lay near the English coast, might be secured almost without a blow, and would strike the French king dumb with consternation, for it would bring his capital within easy reach of attack.

It is surprising that these facts had not presented themselves to Edward before; but, once offered to his mind, he embraced them with avidity. He assembled a fine army of 30,000 men, consisting of 4,000 men-at-arms, 10,000 archers, 10,000 Welsh infantry, and 6,000 Irish. Circumstances, rather than his own wishes, had brought him to depend no longer on mercenary and treacherous allies, but upon his own subjects; and from this moment he began to perform those prodigies of arms which raised the name of Englishmen above all others for steady and transcendent valour. He set sail from Southampton in a fleet of near 1,000 sail of all dimensions, carrying with him the principal nobility of the realm, and his son, the Black Prince, now fifteen years of age. He landed his army at La Hogue, on the coast of Normandy, and there divided it into three bodies, one of which he placed under the command of the Earl of Warwick, another under Sir Godfrey de Harcourt, whom he created marshal, and the third under the Earl of Arundel, whom he made constable; he himself was generalissimo, and before setting out on his march he knighted the Prince of Wales and a number of the young nobility. He next caused the French ships in La Hogue, Harfleur, and Cherbourg to be destroyed. This work was committed to the English fleet, and the plunder of these seaports was given up to those who manned it. Advancing into the country, Edward found it almost wholly defenceless, as Harcourt had represented. Montebourg, Carentan, St. Lo, Valognes, and other places in the Cotentin, were taken and pillaged.

One of the king's objects was to create an alarm, and thus draw off the French forces from Guienne; and in this he succeeded. The King of France, startled by this unexpected invasion, hastened to assemble troops from all quarters. He was soon at the head of a numerous army, which, from the sounding titles of many of the allies and generals, appeared extremely formidable. Amongst them were the Kings of Bohemia and Majorca, the Emperor elect of Germany, the Duke of Lorraine, John of Hainault, and the Count of Flanders. He despatched the Count of Eu, Constable of France, and the Count of Tankerville to defend the populous and commercial city of Caen; but they were speedily overthrown by Edward, who took the two counts prisoners, and, entering the city, massacred the inhabitants without distinction of age, sex, or rank. The scenes perpetrated in Caen are frightful to record, and present a revolting picture of the savage spirit of the age. The wretched people, driven to desperation, barricaded their doors against the ruffianly invaders. They, in turn, set fire to the houses, till Edward, at the earnest entreaty of Sir Godfrey Harcourt, put a stop to the burning, but gave up the town to three days' pillage, reserving for his own share the jewels, plate, silks, fine cloths, and linen. These he shipped for England, with 300 of the richest citizens, for whom he meant to demand heavy ransoms. Two cardinal legates, who had come with the benevolent hope of negotiating a peace, beheld instead this fearful butchery. The Church at this period was the only power which endeavoured to bring to men's remembrance the benign influence of Christianity, and, in exerting itself to check the spirit of military carnage and devastation, certainly discharged its sublime duty well. As for these martial monarchs, they seemed to forget in the fury of war all compassion; and both Edward and his youthful son displayed a hard and sanguinary disposition in their campaigns, in melancholy contrast with the high professions of chivalrous courtesy.

Edward, having inflicted this terrible chastisement on Caen, then advanced towards Rouen, intending to treat it the same; but on arriving opposite to that city, he found the bridge of boats was taken away, and Philip of Valois occupying the right bank of the Seine, with an army far superior to his own. Edward then continued his march up the left bank of the river towards Paris, destroying all the towns and country as he went along. The French king marched along the right bank, breaking down all the bridges, and taking every means to prevent his crossing. After sacking Vernon and Mantes, the English king arrived at Poissy, within nine miles of Paris. Here finding the bridge only partially destroyed, he resorted to this stratagem in order to cross the Seine:—He still ascended the river, as if intending to march on Paris; while his advanced lines scoured the country up to its very gates, burning St. Germain, St. Cloud, Bourg-la-Reine, Nanterre, and Neuilly. Having thus drawn the French king to Paris, he suddenly made a reverse march, reached Poissy, hastily repaired the bridge, and passed his troops over. Once across the Seine, he proceeded by hasty marches towards the river Somme. His vanguard, commanded by Harcourt, met with reinforcements proceeding from Amiens to the king's camp, and defeated them with great slaughter. Reaching Beauvais, he burnt its suburbs, and plundered Pois. As he drew near the Somme, he found himself in the same difficulties as at the Seine. All the bridges were destroyed, and he endeavoured, but unsuccessfully, to pass at Pont St. Remi, Long, and Pequiny. He was now fast being enclosed by the enemy. The Somme was a deep, and, so far as they could find, impassable river; on its right bank showed a strong force under Godemar de Faye, a powerful baron of Normandy, supported by the gentlemen of Artois and Picardy. Approaching the sea, near Oisement, he was thus cooped up between it and the Somme, with Philip and an army of 100,000 men pressing on his rear. In this urgent extremity, the marshals of the army were sent out to see whether they could not possibly discover a ford, but in vain. Edward now appeared to be placed in a very serious dilemma; but, assembling all the prisoners belonging to that part of the country, he offered to any one who would point out a ford his own liberty, and that of thirty of his companions.

On this, a peasant said, "Know, sir, that during the ebb-tide the Somme is so low at a place which I can show you, that it may be passed either by horse or foot with ease. The bottom is plain to see, for it is of chalk, quite white, and so is called Blanchetaque, that is, white water."

On hearing this agreeable news, Edward ordered the trumpets to sound at midnight, and set out from Oisement for the ford. There he arrived some hours before the ebb, and was compelled to wait, seeing Godemar de Faye ready with 12,000 men on the other side prepared to oppose his passage, and every minute expecting the arrival of Philip. As soon as the ford was passable he ordered the marshals to dash into the river, and to drive back the enemy in the name of God and St. George! So great was his impatience that he himself led the way, crying, "Let those who love me follow me." The French forces met them half way, and valiantly disputed the passage; but they were driven back. The English, however, found the main body strongly posted on the right bank at a narrow pass, through which they were compelled to force their way by hard fighting. The Genoese crossbowmen here galled them severely with their arrows; but the English archers replied so vigorously that they drove the enemy from the ground and landed in safety. The passage was effected just in time, for Philip came galloping up before the rear-guard had reached the other side, and did some damage amongst them. But the tide was now too high to permit him to follow; he therefore took his way up the river to Abbeville, and crossed at the bridge there.

Meantime, Edward, having made this admirable passage, resolved to march no farther. He had hoped to receive reinforcements promised him by the repentant Flemings, but they did not appear, and he considered it hazardous to attempt to cross the open plains of Picardy in the presence of so preponderating a force, especially of French cavalry. He resolved to make a stand. He selected a strong position in the forest of Cressy, or Creçy, and near a village of that name. "Here," said he, "I am on the righful heritage of my lady-mother, upon the lands of Ponthieu, given to her as her marriage dower. I now challenge them as my own; and may God defend the right!" He took his station on a gentle ascent, having in his rear a wood, where he placed all his baggage, and defended it with an entrenchment. He also threw up entrenchments on his flanks to secure them, and divided his army into three divisions. The first he put under the command of Edward, the Prince of Wales, now in his sixteenth year, to fight his first battle. Under him were the Earls of Warwick and Oxford, Sir Godfrey Harcourt, the Lord Holland, and Sir John Chandos; but the king confided the especial care of the prince to Sir John and to the Earl of Warwick, who were to assist him by their counsel, and defend him in difficulty. The second line was commanded by the Lords Willoughby, Bassett, and others. The king himself took charge of the third, to hold it in readiness to support either of the other two, or secure their retreat, as circumstances might decide. The number of the English army has been variously stated at from 10,000 to 30,000; but the most authentic accounts state it to be about one-fourth of the French, who were estimated at 120,000. The King of England, having made his arrangements, ordered the troops to take up their ground on the spot where they were to fight, and to await the next morning with confidence of victory. The soldiers set about vigorously polishing their arms, and repairing and burnishing their armour. They were well fed, and refreshed by abundant wine and provisions, which had been seized in the port of Crotoy. The king gave a supper to his barons in his tent, where he made good cheer. When it was concluded he entered into the tent set apart as an oratory, and, falling on his knees, prayed God to bring him "out of the morrow with honour."

EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE.

The night was warm; and the soldiers, having well supped, slept on the grass in their arms. With the early dawn the king and prince were up and amongst their forces.

Edward, mounted on a white palfrey, and attended on each hand by a marshal, rode through the ranks, spoke to the different officers, and exhorted the men to remember that they had that day to fight against superior numbers, and must therefore do their best for the honour of their country. He reminded them of the decided advantage which they had hitherto shown over the enemy; and he had such an air of confidence and cheerfulness that every one augured nothing but

THE BLACK PRINCE AT THE BATTLE OF CREÇY. (*See p.* 419.)

victory. Thus they sat, each in his place, with his helm and bow before him, and so awaited the foe. When they had thus continued till three in the afternoon, and no enemy was yet come up, the king ordered that every man should eat and take a little wine, which they did in great satisfaction.

Meantime, the King of France, having passed the night at Abbeville, set out, reinforced by 1,000 lancers under Amadeus, Count of Savoy. He deemed that he had nothing to do but to overtake the English army in order to annihilate it. For weeks it seemed to have been flying before him, and by hastily crossing the Seine and the Somme it had borne every appearance of wishing, at all costs, to avoid a conflict. He therefore pushed on hastily, and in great confusion. By the time that his advanced guard came in sight of the English lines his forces were tired, and his rear-guard far behind. A veteran Bohemian officer, being sent forward to reconnoitre the English army, rode back to Philip, and strongly recommended him to put off the battle till the next day. He assured him that the English were fresh and well posted, and would undoubtedly make a desperate defence. The French, depressed and exhausted by the haste of their march from Abbeville, must fight at vast disadvantage.

The king commanded a halt; but the ill-disciplined troops still pressed on, the van brandishing their swords, and crying, in their over-confidence, "Attack, take, slay!" and those behind, hurrying forward, declaring they would not stop till they were as forward as the foremost. So they rushed on pell-mell. Froissart says no one, except he had been present, could form any idea of the confusion of the scene. Philip had divided his army into three divisions: the first commanded by the King of Bohemia, supported by his son, Charles of Luxembourg, Emperor-elect of Germany, and Charles, Duke of Alençon, the brother of King Philip, a brave but haughty and rash youth. In this division were 15,000 Genoese crossbowmen, headed by Anthony Doria and Carolo Grimaldi. These bowmen were looked upon as the great strength of the army—an overmatch for the English archers, whom they were quickly to drive from the field. They were backed by 20,000 infantry. The second division was led by Philip himself, consisting of 6,000 men-at-arms and 40,000 foot. The broad banner of France was displayed before the king, and at his side rode the titular King of Majorca. The rear division followed, conducted by the Count of Savoy, with 5,000 lances and 20,000 foot. The last was most formidable in numbers; but all superiority was lost in the disorder of the march. The kings and dukes and great lords were hurried along, without power to exert any command, and Philip himself, in striving to enforce a halt, was borne onward as by a torrent. Finding himself face to face with the enemy, he cried, "Bring up the Genoese; begin the battle, in the name of God and St. Denis!"

But these Italians, who were brave and famous men, very reasonably complained of thus being hurried into battle, worn out as they were with carrying their heavy crossbows in the hasty march of six leagues, and said they had more need of rest than to fight that day. On hearing this, the Duke of Alençon cried out, "See! that is the help we get by employing these fellows, who thus fail us at the pinch." The sensitive Italians heard these words with deep anger, and moved on to battle. At this moment the heavens seemed to announce that a great and terrible conflict was about to take place. A thunderstorm, making it almost as dark as night, burst over the opposing hosts, and before it went a flight of crows and ravens, sweeping over the armies. When the sun broke out again it flashed in the faces of the Genoese, and the strings of their crossbows had become relaxed with the wet. On the other hand, the sun was on the backs of the English, and they had kept their longbows dry in their cases. They were drawn up by the king in ranks, crossed in the manner of a *herse*, or harrow, so that the discharges of the different ranks might support each other, like the discharges of combined squares of musketry in these times. No sooner, therefore, did the Genoese crossbowmen, after giving three leaps and three loud shouts to intimidate the English, let fly a shower of arrows, than the English archers stepped each of them one pace forward, and shot their arrows so thickly that, as the chronicler describes it, it seemed to snow. The Genoese, confounded by the perpetual hail of the English arrows, which pierced their armour, fell back on the men-at-arms, and the confusion then became fearful. The Genoese cut their bowstrings or threw away their bows, and endeavoured to make their escape amongst the horses of the cavalry. The King of France, seeing this, cried out, "Slay me these cowards, for they stop our way, without doing any good!" The men-at-arms advanced at full gallop right over the wretched Genoese, cutting them down right and left, and numbers were trodden under foot; while the cavalry itself was thrown into disorder by thus riding over their own bowmen to come at the enemy.

All this time the English archers kept pouring in their deadly shafts, dropping the knights and soldiers of Alençon's fine cavalry rapidly from their saddles; while the Cornish men and Welsh, armed with large knives, stole amongst the ranks and despatched those knights as they lay.

Edward had given strict orders to take no prisoners, because the enemy was so much more numerous, that it would encumber his fighting men, and keep them from the battle in looking after their captives.

In spite of the confusion, the Duke of Alençon and the Count of Flanders broke at length through it, and, charging past the line of English archers, took the cavalry of the Prince of Wales in flank. Both sides now fought desperately; but the English men-at-arms handled the French cavalry so roughly that the greater part of them were slain. Notwithstanding, three other squadrons of French and Germans, rushing forward impetuously, broke through the archers, and pushed their way into the very place where the young prince was performing prodigies of valour. The second division, under the Earls of Arundel and Northampton, advanced to support the prince, and the contest became furious. Alençon displayed the most fiery courage, and, amid a crowd of French, Germans, Savoyards, and Bohemians, pressed upon the prince with a vigour which threatened to carry all before it. The French king, eager to support Alençon, charged nobly on the archers, but could not penetrate their line, or the event might have been doubtful. The Earl of Warwick, alarmed by the dangerous position of the prince, despatched Sir Thomas Norwich to Edward, entreating him to send aid to his son.

Edward, who was watching the progress of the battle from a windmill on the hill-top, demanded of the messenger whether the prince were dead, wounded, or felled to the ground. "Not so, thank God," answered the messenger; "but he needs assistance." "Nay, then," said the king, "he has no aid from me. Tell him from me that I know he will bear him like a man, and show himself worthy of the knighthood I have so lately conferred on him. In this battle he must win his own spurs."

This being reported to the prince, gave new courage and strength to both him and his attendants. The force thrown in by Arundel and Northampton bore down the enemy slew the gallant Alençon, and dispersed his battalions; the Welsh, with their long knives, destroying all left alive on the ground.

The King of France, still struggling to come up to the rescue of his brother, arrived only to find him killed and his forces scattered. The flying cavalry communicated their panic to the king's own followers; but the king himself scorned to fly, and fought most bravely. His horse was killed under him; he mounted another, and still fought on till only about sixty of his bravest attendants remained around him. Repeatedly wounded, he would probably have lost his life; but John of Hainault, having in vain urged him to quit the field, forcibly seized the bridle of his horse, and led him away. The whole French army was in flight, the English pursuing, and putting to the sword without mercy all whom they could reach.

The King of France rode away till he came to the castle of Broye, where, summoning the warder to open the gates, that officer demanded who was there, for it was a dark night. "It is the fortune of France," said the king, probably in bitter recollection of the flatteries which had styled him "the Fortunate." On entering, the king had only five of his barons with him. They refreshed themselves with wine, and then continued their flight, with the help of guides, to Amiens.

Such was the memorable battle of Creçy, one of the greatest and most surprising victories which ever was gained by any king. It was fought on Saturday, the 26th of August, 1346. On that fatal field lay slain two kings, eleven great princes, eighty bannerets, 1,200 knights, and 30,000 men. It began after three o'clock in the afternoon, and continued till darkness ended the conflict.

Amongst the chief men killed, besides the Duke of Alençon, were the Dukes of Lorraine and Bourbon, the Counts of Blois, Vaudemont, Aumale, and Philip's old ally, the Earl of Flanders. Of the two slain Kings of Majorca and Bohemia, the death of John of Bohemia was very remarkable. He was old, and nearly blind. When all seemed lost, inquiring after his son, and hearing that he was wounded and compelled to fly, and that the Black Prince showed himself irresistible, he said, "Sirs, ye are my knights and good liegemen; will ye conduct me so far into the battle that I may strike one good stroke with my sword?" His faithful knights regarding these as the words of sad despair, four of them agreed to sacrifice their lives with him, and tying his bridle rein on each side to their own, they thus charged into the thickest of the fight, and were found the next day lying dead together, the reins of their horses still unsevered.

The rejoicing on the part of the English may be imagined. The soldiers lit up huge fires and torches to disperse the darkness, and by that light King Edward descended from his eminence, and, taking his valiant son in his arms before the whole army, he kissed him, and, according to Froissart, said, "Sweet son, God gave you good perseverance. You are my true son, for valiantly have you acquitted yourself to-day, and shown yourself worthy of a crown." The prince bowed lowly, and declared that the victory was owing to the king.

The next day it proved foggy, and the king sending out a detachment of 500 lancers and 2,000 archers to scour the fields and discover whether any bodies of French were yet keeping their ground, they met with two numerous detachments hastening to the assistance of the King of France, one of them headed by the Archbishop of Rouen and Grand Prior of France. They were coming from Beauvais and Rouen, and made a vigorous resistance; but were all cut to pieces, in accordance with the barbarous policy of Edward on that occasion. Some historians have asserted that the English raised a number of French standards, which they took, on an eminence; which thus attracting stragglers of the French army, they were butchered as they arrived. These are blots on the glory of that famous victory which it is painful to record.

The king sent out the Lords Cobham and Suffolk, with attendant heralds, to recognise the arms, and secretaries to write down the names of the fallen, and they returned an account of the numbers we have given; but of the English only three knights, one esquire, and a few of inferior rank.

Edward having attended mass on Sunday, and returned solemn thanks to Heaven for this great victory, on the Monday morning ordered the bodies of the kings, nobles, and knights to be borne to the monastery of Montenay for burial, and proclaimed three days' truce, that the people of the country might come in and bury their dead. Having discharged this duty, he marched north, taking the way by the coast, through Montreuil-sur-mer, towards Calais, which he had resolved to take possession of, as a secure and necessary entrance into the kingdom of France for the prosecution of his grand design on it.

CHAPTER XXXI.

EDWARD III. (*concluded*).

Siege of Calais—Battle of Neville's Cross—Capture of the Scottish King—Institution of the Garter—The Black Death—Disturbances in France excited by the King of Navarre—Battle of Poitiers—The King of France taken Prisoner and brought to England—Disorders in France—Affairs in Scotland—Fresh Invasion of France—The Peace of Bretigny—Return of King John to France—Disorders of that Kingdom—The Free Companies—Expedition of the Black Prince into Castile—Fresh Campaign in France—Decline of the English Power there—Death of the Black Prince—Death of Edward III.—Character of his Reign and State of the Kingdom.

WITHIN six days of the victory of Creçy, Edward had sat down before the city of Calais. He had now fully adopted Sir Godfrey de Harcourt's plan of conquering France through Normandy; and the only remarkable thing is, that, having once entertained the idea of that conquest, he should have overlooked for a moment its unparalleled advantages. Guienne was distant, and only to be reached by a voyage which, at that time, must often be formidable, across the stormy Bay of Biscay. Even in sending succours to the much nearer parts of Brittany, we have just seen that they were detained by contrary winds forty days. Once there, he was surrounded in a great measure by hostile provinces; while, on the other hand, Calais lay within twenty-four miles of his own coast, which gave him most easy access to Normandy, Picardy, and Artois. Seeking the alliance of the Flemings, this province lay near to their own, and no doubt he would have found that people much more disposed for an invasion of a rich and proximate country than for that of the remote Guienne. Rouen, the capital of the province, could be approached direct by the Seine, and placed the king on the very highway to Paris, and only eighty miles distant from it.

VIEW IN CALAIS: RUE DE LA CITADELLE, SHOWING THE BELFRY.

In investing Calais with his victorious army, Edward calculated on the effect which his destructive overthrow of the French must produce on the inhabitants. Moreover, to secure his capital and northern provinces, Philip was compelled to recall his son, the Duke of Normandy, with his army. No sooner did he retreat than the Earl of Lancaster, formerly Earl of Derby—who had been much pressed by the French, and enabled to hold his ground only by assistance which Sir Walter Manny brought up from Brittany—leaving Bordeaux, crossed the Garonne and the Dordogne, took Mirabel, Lusignan, Taillebourg, St. Jean d'Angély, and laid waste the country as far as Poitiers, which he also took by storm, and plundered. He thence extended his incursions to the Loire, and ranged through the southern provinces of the kingdom, carrying terror and devastation everywhere.

All this time the war was raging in Brittany, where the Countess de Montfort was creating a powerful diversion in favour of her ally, the King of England, and against her enemy, the King of France. Uniting her forces with those of the English under Sir Thomas Dagworth, they raised the siege of Roche Derrien, which her rival, Charles of Blois, was investing with 15,000 men, and took Charles of Blois prisoner. The countess sent him to London for safe keeping, where he was confined for nine years in the Tower, as her husband had been in the Louvre. On the captivity of Charles, his countess, Jane the Lame, took on herself the conduct of affairs, and for some time maintained valiantly the cause of her house; though neither she nor her husband, on his restoration to liberty, could ever overcome the brave-hearted Countess of Montfort, who transmitted her province to her descendants.

In this, truly called the age of great women, another of still higher rank, Queen Philippa of England, was at the same time showing herself equally courageous, and capable of transacting public affairs. Philip of France, alarmed at the vast success and the military genius of Edward III., exerted his influence with David II., King of the Scots, to make a diversion on his behalf by invading England during Edward's absence. David Bruce had passed many years with his young queen in France, and was, therefore, under many obligations to the king. He was recalled by the Scots to his throne in 1342, and had kept up a friendly correspondence with his old host. Though David was a brave young prince, he did not possess the sagacity, or his years did not give him the experience, of his father. He was equally impelled by resentment to his brother-in-law, the King of England, who had driven him from his throne, and by the instigations of the French king, to make occasional raids into England. In the four years since he had been reinstated he had made no less than three successful expeditions of this kind, and now that his old benefactor was so sorely worsted, he prepared for a still more decisive invasion. He placed himself at the head of 3,000 cavalry and 30,000 other troops, mounted on galloways. Marching from Perth, he reached the borders, his forces then numbering, it is said, 50,000 men. He took the castle of Liddel, burnt Lanercost, sacked the priory of Hexham, advanced into the diocese of Durham, and encamped at Beaurepaire, or Bearpark, near the city of Durham. David calculated on an easy triumph over the English, nearly the whole of the nobility being absent at the siege of Calais. But Philippa, Edward's queen, assembled a body of 12,000 men, and, advancing rapidly northward, came up with the Scots as they were laying waste the country round Durham, and pitched her camp in Auckland Park. She gave the command of her army to Lord Percy, but, according to Froissart, she herself mounted her horse, and rode through the ranks, exhorting the men to remember that their king was absent, that the honour and safety of England were in their hands, and appealing to them to defend the realm and punish the Scots for their barbarous ravages. She could not be persuaded to quit the field for a place of safety till the armies were on the point of engaging. It has been doubted how far this proceeding of the queen is strictly true, not being mentioned by the old English chroniclers; but, besides the testimony of Froissart, it is unquestionable that Philippa's bold and able management did much to ensure the victory which followed.

The Scots, who appear to have been thrown off their guard by over-confidence, and who were thinking more of plunder than of the enemy, were taken by surprise. Douglas, the famous knight of Liddesdale, was intercepted at Sunderland Bridge on his return from a raid as far as Ferry-on-the-Hill, and narrowly escaped being caught, 500 of his followers being cut to pieces. David, also, taken by surprise, still mustered his troops, and took his stand at Neville's Cross, near the city of Durham. The English archers, securing themselves under the hedges, shot down the horses of the Scots, threw them, crowded as they were together, into confusion, and laid their riders prostrate in the dust. David fought undauntedly; but Edward Balliol, who commanded the reserve, made a skilful attack of cavalry on his flank, and his troops giving way on all sides, he was forcibly taken prisoner by one John Copeland, a Northumberland squire—a man of huge stature and strength—but not before he had received two arrow wounds, and, refusing to listen to calls to surrender, had knocked out two of the front teeth of his captor by a blow of his gauntlet. Copeland conveyed his royal prize to his castle of Ogle, and was careful not to give him up except to properly authorised royal commissioners, when he received the title of banneret and an estate of £500 a year—equal to as many thousands now—and was made sheriff of Northumberland and governor of Berwick.

The joy of the people of Durham was unbounded, for their nobles and dignitaries of the Church fought in the foremost ranks, having the deepest hereditary hatred to the Scots, from their numerous spoilings by them. The Bishop of

Durham led off the first division with Lord Percy; the Archbishop of York led the second with Lord Neville; and the Bishop of Lincoln the third with Lord Mowbray. The Prior of Durham, it was said, had been commanded the night before, in a dream by St. Cuthbert, "to raise the *corporax cloth* with which St. Cuthbert, during mass, did cover the chalice," as a banner on a spear point; and accordingly he and a body of monks, at a spot called the Red Hills, in sight of both armies, knelt round it in prayer, while another body of the brethren on the top of the great campanile, or bell-tower of the cathedral, sang hymns of praise, which, says Knighton, were distinctly heard by both armies. A third body of the clergy were engaged in the very hottest of the battle.

The third division of the Scots, under the Earl of Moray, was actually cut to pieces on the field, only eighty of them being left at the time of the king's surrender. With the king were taken the Earls of Sutherland, Monteith, Fife, Carrick, Moray, and Strathearn; Sir William Douglas, John, and Alan Stuart, and a long list of nobles and knights. Monteith was beheaded as a traitor, having accepted office under Edward.

Never did the Scots receive a more fatal overthrow; some historians say they had 15,000, others 20,000, slain, amongst whom were the Earl Marshal Keith and Sir Thomas Charteris. Of the English leaders, only Lord Hastings fell. King David was conveyed to London and lodged in the Tower. This memorable battle of Neville's Cross took place on the 17th of October, 1346.

Having secured her royal prisoner, Queen Philippa went over to Calais, where she was received with all the triumph and honour which her meritorious conduct deserved. She found Edward in the midst of the siege, which continued obstinate. John of Vienne, the governor, supported by a strong garrison, and well provisioned, maintained a spirited defence. The place, lying in a flat, swampy situation, was trying to the health of the English army, and was immensely strong, with its ditches, ramparts, and impassable morasses. The king, therefore, quite aware that it was not to be taken in a hurry, fixed his camp in the most eligible spot he could find, drew entrenchments round the city, built huts for his soldiers, which he thatched with straw or broom, and prepared by various means to render their winter campaign tolerable. His huts presented the appearance of a second town, called by the French chroniclers the Ville du Bois, or town of wood, and the harbour was blockaded to prevent the entrance of relief of any kind.

John of Vienne, perceiving the king's intention to starve them out, collected all the inhabitants of both sexes who were not necessary to the defence, and sent 1,700 of them out of the city. Edward not only allowed the poor creatures to pass, but gave them a good refreshment, and each a small piece of money. But as the siege continued, and John of Vienne again put out 500 more of what he considered useless mouths, Edward lost patience and is said to have refused them a passage; and the governor of Calais declining to allow them to re-enter the city, they are reported to have perished of starvation between the town walls and the English lines.

As the siege grew desperate, violent efforts were made to relieve the city. The King of France sent ships to force a passage, but in vain. The English fleet had gradually grown to upwards of 700 sail, carrying more than 14,000 men, and of these, eighty of the largest ships, under the Earl of Warwick, constantly swept the Channel. The King of France was meantime making the most strenuous exertions to raise a force sufficient to expel the invader. He succeeded in winning over the young Count of Flanders, as he had done his father. This young nobleman appears to have been capable of playing a very mean part. The Free Towns proposed to him to marry Isabella of England, a princess of great beauty, and the young man, pretending to fall in with their wishes, came to the English camp, and paid his addresses to the princess as if with the most serious intentions; but having carried on his dissimulation to a disgraceful length, he seized the opportunity afforded by a hawking excursion to slip away, and made off to the French camp.

Philip levied everywhere men and money, and compelled the clergy, as well as the laity, to yield their treasure, and even their church plate; a massive cross of gold belonging to the Abbey of St. Denis being carried off. He at length appeared before Calais with an army which the writers of the age assert to have amounted to 200,000 men. The governor of Calais had, indeed, sent letters to him, announcing that the inhabitants had eaten their horses, dogs, and rats, and, unless relieved, must soon eat each other. These letters were intercepted. The King of England, however, sent them on, tauntingly asking Philip why he did not come and relieve his people. But Philip found Edward so entrenched amongst marshes and fortifications that he could not force a passage anywhere. Two roads only were left to the town—one along the sea-shore, and the other by a causeway through the marshes; but the coastway was completely raked by the English ships and boats, crowded with archers, drawn up on the strand, and the causeway was defended by towers and drawbridges, occupied by a great force of the most daring men in the army, under the command of the Earl of Lancaster and Sir Walter Manny, who had come hither from their victorious demonstration in Gascony, Guienne, and Poitou.

The King of France looked on this densely armed position with despair, and after vainly challenging King Edward to come out and fight in the open field, he withdrew. The starving people of Calais, who, on seeing the approach of the vast royal host, had hung out their banners on the walls, lighted large bonfires, and sounded all their instruments of martial music, now changed their joyous acclamations into shrieks and groans of despair. They lowered all their banners but the great banner of France, which floated on the loftiest tower of the city, in their dejection, and the next day they pulled that down in desperation, and displayed the banner of England in its place, in token of surrender.

To Sir Walter Manny, who was sent to speak with John of Vienne over the wall, that brave commander declared that they were literally perishing with hunger, and asked the lives and liberties of the citizens as the sole condition of surrender. Sir Walter told the governor that he knew well his royal master's mind, and that he could not promise them the acceptance of that proposal, the king being incensed at their obstinate resistance, and determined to punish them for it. It was in vain that the governor represented that it was this very conduct that a gallant prince like Edward ought to honour—that it was what he would have expected from an English knight. Sir Walter Manny acknowledged the justice of the sentiment, and returned to soften the king's resolution; but he could obtain only this mitigation, that six of the principal citizens should be sacrificed instead of the whole people; and they were required to come to the camp in their shirts, bare-headed and bare-footed, carrying the keys of the city and castle in their hands, and with halters about their necks.

When this ultimatum was made known to the people of Calais, they were struck with horror. John of Vienne, despairing of fulfilling the demand of the stern English king, caused the church bells to be rung, and, collecting the people in the market-place, laid the matter before them. There was much weeping and lamenting, but all shrank from the dreadful sacrifice. At length, Eustace de St. Pierre, one of the most eminent men of the place, arose and said, "Gentlemen, great and small, he who shall save the people of this fair town at the price of his own blood shall doubtless deserve well of God and man. I will be one who will offer my head to the King of England as a ransom for the town of Calais." At this noble resolve the assembly was moved to tears, and very soon other great burgesses, Jehan d'Aire, Jacque Wisant, and Peter Wisant, his brother, and two others, offered themselves.

They presently took off their ordinary dress, reduced themselves to the condition dictated by the conqueror, and thus they were conducted by the brave John of Vienne, very sorrowfully, and mounted on a small palfrey, for he was too weak to walk from wounds and fasting. Thus they came, followed by the sad people, men, women, and children, to the gates. The six voluntary victims were admitted into the English camp, and thus conducted before Edward, when they knelt before him, and presenting him the keys, implored his mercy. But Edward, looking on them with much displeasure, ordered them to instant execution. Then the noble barons and knights entreated that he would not refuse to listen to their petitions for their pardon, in which the Prince of Wales joined. Nothing, however, seemed to move the grim monarch. The brave Sir Walter Manny ventured to remind him of the greatness of his name, and of the stain this action would be upon it. At this the king made a stern grimace, and ordered the headsman to be summoned. Then the queen, falling on her knees, said, "Ah, gentle sire! since I have crossed the seas in great danger I have asked you nothing; but now I implore you, for the sake of the son of the Holy Mary, and for your love of me, you will have mercy on these six men."

The queen had every right to ask such a boon. She had come to announce to the king that she had been able to defend his kingdom in his absence from the Scots, to win a great victory at Neville's Cross, and to take the King of Scots captive. She was, moreover, far advanced in pregnancy, and yet had run every hazard to bring him such tidings.

"Ah, dame," he said, "I could well wish that you had been elsewhere this day; but how can I deny you anything? Take these men, and dispose of them as you will."

QUEEN PHILIPPA INTERCEDING FOR THE BURGESSES OF CALAIS. *(See p. 424.)*

The delighted queen thanked the king heartily, had befitting attire brought for these worthy citizens, gave them in her tent a good repast, and presenting them each with six nobles, sent them away, giving orders that they should be guarded safely through the host to the town gates.

This scene, which is related on the testimony of Froissart, who dedicated his history to the queen herself, has been questioned by some historians as doubtful, particularly as Avesbury, who is minute in his relation of the surrender of Calais, is silent about it; and as it seems too derogatory to the magnanimity of Edward III., after suffering so many of the inhabitants to pass out of the city, and even relieving their wants. But we must remember what was the king's conduct at Caen, and also what is asserted* of his immovable disregard to the perishing cries of the second crowd sent out of the city; and that Froissart was a contemporary. Under all these circumstances, the transaction appears highly probable, and mankind will not readily give up a passage of human life, so full of noble sacrifice and sympathy, and which has held its place firmly in history and tradition for five hundred years.

The day following the surrender, August 4th, 1347, the king and queen rode into the town amid the sound of martial music, and followed by all their great lords and many men-at-arms. There they took up their quarters, and remained till the queen was delivered of a daughter, thence named Margaret of Calais. Immediately on taking possession, he ordered every inhabitant to quit the city, dispossessing them of their houses and property within the town, and substituting a thoroughly English population. The new inhabitants of the town were substantial citizens of London, and large numbers of agricultural people from the adjoining county of Kent, to whom he gave the surrounding lands. From that day to the reign of Queen Mary, Calais became altogether an English colony. He made it the mart of wool, leather, lead, and tin, the four principal articles which England furnished to the Continent, and where the foreign merchants could come to procure them. Having strengthened the defences of the town, Edward concluded a truce with Philip, which was by degrees extended to six years. Neither of these monarchs, however, would have listened to terms of peace but for the constant and meritorious entreaties of the Pope.

At this period originated the celebrated Order of the Garter, which still retains its value in the eyes of aspirants to royal rewards. This Order was instituted to excite emulation amongst the aristocratic warriors of the time, in imitation of orders of a similar nature, both religious and military, which had been created by different monarchs of Europe. The number was, and is still, confined to twenty-five persons, besides the sovereign, except princes of the blood and illustrious foreigners, who have been admitted since the reign of George III., and hence the high value attached to this badge of distinction. The traditionary story of its origin is, that at a State ball the king's mistress, a Countess of Salisbury, dropped her garter, which the king picked up, and, observing some of the courtiers smile at the action, as if they thought he had not obtained that favour merely by accident, he exclaimed, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense!*" ("Evil be to him who evil thinks"), which became the motto of the Order. Historians have chosen to doubt on this subject as on many others, and antiquarians have puzzled themselves to discover some other origin; but still the story is a very probable one, and the tradition retains its full hold on public belief. The Order was founded, according to the statutes, in 1350, and, even to the time of Edward IV., ladies were admitted, and wore the badge of the Order. The wives of the knights companions and other great ladies had robes, the gift of the sovereign, ornamented with small garters. Our queens generally wear the Garter, set with diamonds, on the left arm.

But in the midst of the gaieties, giving of honours, and festivities which succeeded the conquest of Calais and the glory of Creçy, there came one of those terrible visitations which from time to time have swept over Europe under the general name of plague or pestilence—awful messengers of Providence to men, warning them to observe cleanly and healthy habits of life. It was known as the "Black Death." These fatal epidemics have always appeared to originate in the same quarter—eastern Asia—and to sweep over the earth in every direction, as in radiation from that centre, carrying wholesale destruction into every place where the inhabitants were not careful to observe sanitary regulations. By medical men the disease has been regarded as a virulent species of typhus fever, which in modern times has assumed the character of cholera, which issues periodically from the same regions, and travels the earth, fixing on every spot where there is a crowded population living in dirty dwellings, ill-drained streets, swampy hollows, and amid any vapours of putridity. Like the cholera, the

QUEEN PHILIPPA INTERCEDING FOR THE BURGHERS OF CALAIS.

plague had its cold, succeeded by its hot, fits, attended by vomiting, diarrhœa, and great depression of the vital powers. The cholera now issues from India; the plague of the time of Edward III. was traced to China, and visited on its way India, Egypt, Greece, and most of the western nations of Europe. Stowe says that in one churchyard in London, purchased by Sir Walter Manny for the poor 50,000 bodies were buried. In fact, it fell, like the cholera, most severely on the poorer and worst lodged and fed people; it is said to have half depopulated England; and so many of the inferior clergy perished, that very many churches were left without any one to perform the service.

The mass of wealth brought from France by the victorious army did not prevent the finances of Edward from being in a very exhausted and unsatisfactory state. Those of the King of France were worse; and these causes tended to prolong the truce. Edward several times proposed to Philip to make a permanent peace, on condition that the sovereignty of Guienne, Calais, and other lands held in fief by the English in France should be acknowledged on Edward's renouncing all claim to the crown of that country. Philip steadfastly refused to listen to such terms. He died during this truce, and Edward renewed his offer to his successor, John, but with like effect.

About this time Edward and his son, the Black Prince, put to sea with a good fleet to chastise the Spaniards of the ports on the Bay of Biscay, who had repeatedly joined the French in intercepting and seizing his merchant vessels. The battle was fought within view of the English coast, and was watched by the queen's attendants from the hills behind Winchelsea. The engagement was contested with much valour on both sides; and in it both the king and prince had very nearly terminated their lives, for their ship was sinking, and they were only just saved by the Earl of Lancaster coming to their assistance. The result was a victory to the English, and the capture of fourteen of the Spanish vessels, though with great loss of life on our side.

But circumstances were ripening, destined to involve England and France again in war. John, the son of Philip, whom we have often met under the name of the Duke of Normandy, commanding the armies against the English and Bretons, succeeded his father in 1350. He was then about thirty-one years of age, courageous, of great integrity of mind, possessing much experience for his age, and altogether a far more honourable prince than his father, whom his subjects hated for his avarice and for his reckless invasion of their rights. Philip had, in his youth, been termed the Fortunate, but proved eventually more entitled to the name of the Unlucky. John was now, by contrast, styled the Good; but John, however well-meaning, was evidently destitute of real sagacity, and his very sense of honour hurried him into the commission of deeds which early shook his popularity. The Count de Brienne, Count of Eu and Guisnes, and Constable of France, was accused of an intention to betray his county of Guisnes, adjacent to the town of Calais, to the English monarch. John caused him to be seized at a festival at Paris immediately after his coronation, and threw him into a dungeon, whence, three days afterwards, he brought him out before the lords of his council, and, without any form of trial or permission of defence, had his head struck off. This arbitrary act excited great fears of the future proceedings of the king amongst his nobility.

But John's authority was very soon invaded and disturbed by his near kinsman, Charles, King of Navarre. This young prince was of the blood royal of France, his mother being daughter of Louis X. Charles of Navarre came to court, and sought to render himself highly popular with both king and people. He succeeded so well, that he obtained the king's daughter, Joan, who must have been a mere girl at that time. It was soon found, however, that he was a mixture of the most shining talents and the most diabolical qualities. He was handsome, bold, eloquent, affable in his manners, and most insinuating in his address, but, at the same time, intriguing, ambitious, unprincipled, and revengeful. He had always some daring scheme on foot, and, if he failed, abandoned it without care, and plunged into another. He demanded of the king the post of Constable of Normandy, vacated by the execution of De Brienne; and when the king, fearing his possession of that important command, bestowed it upon his favourite, Charles de la Cerda, the King of Navarre assassinated him in his castle of L'Aigle, in Normandy. He then boldly avowed the deed, put himself at the head of an armed force, called around him all the hot and disaffected young nobility of France, declared himself independent of the French crown, and made offers of alliance with the English. John called upon him to lay down his arms, and resume his place as a good subject; but he refused, except on condition of an absolute pardon for the murder of the Constable, large grants of money and lands, and, above all, the delivery of the second son of John as a hostage for the faithful maintenance of the contract.

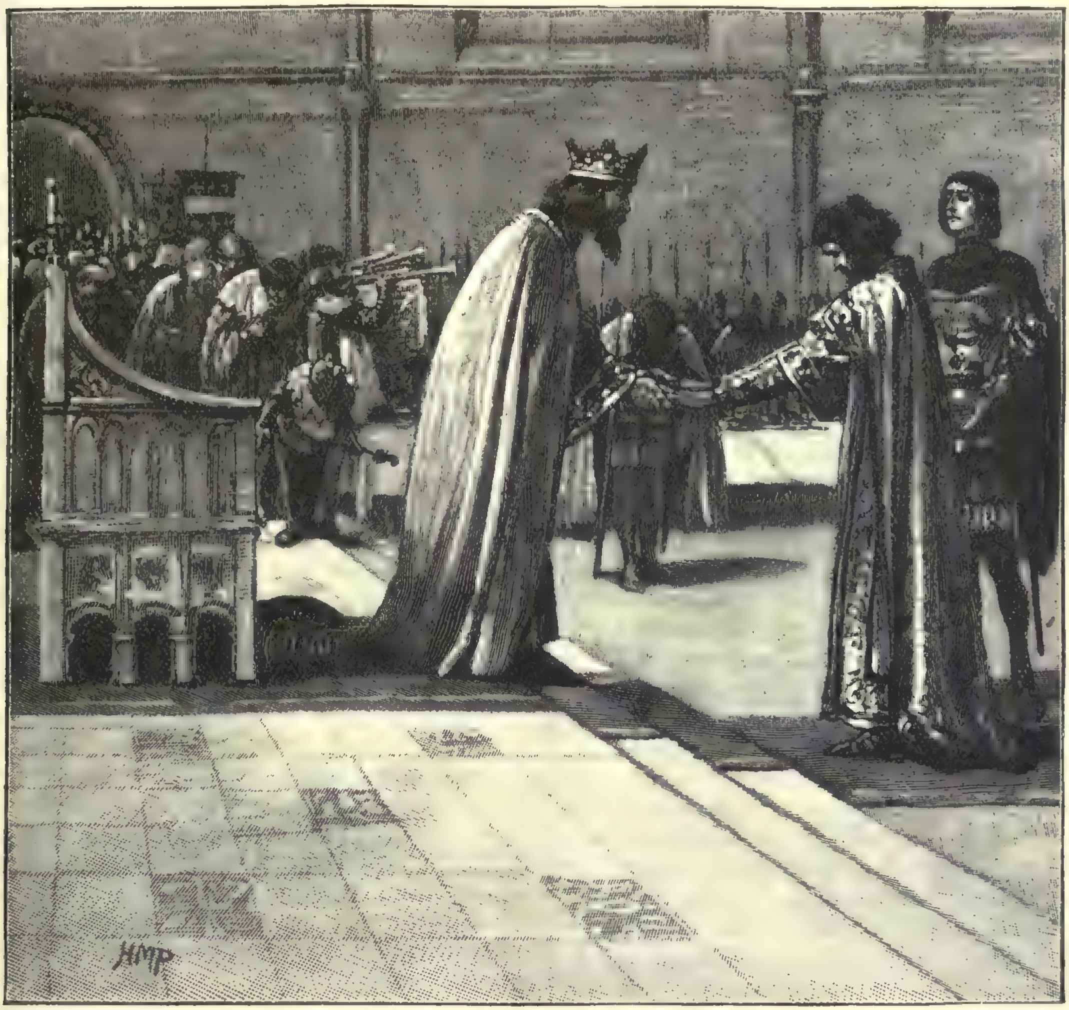
The French king was weak enough to comply; and then Charles of Navarre, in March, 1355, went to court, where John sat imposingly on his throne, and Navarre went through a farce of submission. The King of England, believing that it would not be long before the intrigues of the King of Navarre would produce civil discord in France, and expose it to his own plans of invasion, sent the Prince of Wales, now universally called the Black Prince, from the colour of his armour, into Gascony and Aquitaine, as his lieutenant, with an army which soon grew there to 60,000 men. From thence he entered the country of Toulouse, and took Carcassonne, Narbonne, and several other towns, committing great ravages.

Edward, at the same time, attacked France on the side of Normandy. He advanced to St. Omer, where the King of France had posted himself in expectation of this attack, but John took care not to come to open battle. The state of the internal affairs of his kingdom probably inspired John with caution, for his treacherous cousin of Navarre had resumed his seditious courses. He had united himself with the factious Sir Godfrey de Harcourt, and had succeeded in even winning over for awhile Charles, the king's eldest son, only seventeen years of age, to his party. But the young prince—the first Prince Royal of France who ever bore the title of dauphin, from his father having purchased that duchy for 100,000 florins, and conferred its feudal title on him—was soon repentant of his unfilial conduct, and betrayed Charles of Navarre, and a number of his noble associates, into his father's hands. The most guilty of the nobles were at once executed, and the King of Navarre thrown into prison. But this did not mend matters. The brother of Charles, Philip of Navarre, assumed the management of affairs, put all his towns and castles into a state of defence, and renewed the alliance with the English. Thus situated, John avoided an engagement which might be followed by an overthrow, and leave France exposed to the united efforts of his internal and foreign enemies. He contented himself with sending a challenge to fight a battle with Edward, for which he made no disposition whatever, so that Edward treated the offer with contempt, and retired to Calais.

From Calais he was speedily recalled to England by an incursion of the Scots, the usual diversion now of the French kings. Edward appeared before Berwick in the middle of winter, January, 1356, and, as usual, at his appearance the Scots withdrew. Edward, determined this time, if possible, to finish the subjugation of Scotland, made a contract at Roxburgh, on the 20th of January, with Edward Balliol, by which he purchased all the rights of Balliol to the Scottish throne for 5,000 marks and an annuity of £2,000. These rights were about as real as the rights of Edward to the crown of France. The Scots had expelled Balliol in 1341, and renounced him and his claims for ever. But with this pretension Edward once more marched through the Lothians with fire and sword, burnt Edinburgh and Haddington, and then retreated for want of provisions, pursued by the Scots, who now advanced from their hiding-places, and dreadfully harassed the rear of his army. After this Edward Balliol, freed from any pretence on the crown of Scotland, lived in retirement, and died without heirs in 1367.

Affairs in France were now approaching a crisis which well nigh proved fatal to the independence of that country. Edward III., learning that the internal disorders of France increased in consequence of the imprisonment of Charles of Navarre, sent out a small army under the Earl of Lancaster, to co-operate with the party of that prince in Normandy. At the same time the Black Prince, who had returned from his Toulouse expedition to Bordeaux, set out once more with an army not exceeding 12,000 men, and few of them English except a body of archers. He now directed his marauding expedition northwards, and went on laying waste the country, and burning and plundering towns, in a style which this young prince, celebrated by the historians for every virtue, appeared especially to delight in. He ravaged the Agenois and Limousin, Auvergne, Marche, and Berri. He attacked Bourges, but without success; and it then appeared that his intention was to advance to Normandy, and join his forces to those under Lancaster. But he found all the bridges on the Loire broken down, and the news which reached him of the motions of the King of France inclined him to retreat. John, exasperated at the devastations of the prince, and thinking that he had every chance of defeating him in his rash advance into the heart of the kingdom with so small a force, set out to intercept his return with an army of upwards of 60,000 men.

John marched for Blois, and, crossing the Loire, advanced for Poitiers; and the country people, naturally enraged at the prince's wanton destruction of every place he approached, kept him in ignorance of the king's approach. Edward, therefore, unconsciously advanced on Poitiers, and on the 17th of September came, all unawares, on the rear of the French army at the village of Maupertuis, only two leagues from Poitiers. His scouts came galloping in, announcing that the whole country was filled by the great army. And, in fact, never did a King of France command a more promising force. Consisting of 60,000 men, there were in it 20,000 men-at-arms, including 2,000 men-at-arms, or cavalry, sent by the Scots. Most of the princes of the blood were with him and the greater part of the nobility. On the other hand, the Prince of Wales's troops had decreased to about 10,000, of whom the bulk were Gascons; but he had 4,000 archers, and on them was the grand dependence.



EDWARD RECEIVING KING JOHN OF FRANCE. (*See p.* 432.)

The circumstances were such as to confound the bravest and most experienced commander; but the prince, though sensible of the seriousness of his situation, did not for a moment lose heart. With consummate ability he took up his position on the summit of a gentle declivity, planted with vineyards, approachable only by one narrow road, flanked with hedges and thickets. This ground, so strong by nature, he employed the whole army to make stronger by trenches and embankments. Sir Eustace de Ribeaumont, a stalwart knight, who had fought with his father at Calais, went out with three other knights to reconnoitre the English army, and brought this word to the King of France :—"Sire, we have seen the enemy. By our guess they amount to 2,000 men-at-arms, 4,000 archers, and 1,500 or 2,000 other men ; and appear to form one division. They are strongly posted, wisely ordered, and their position is well nigh inaccessible. In order to attack them, there is but one passage, where four horsemen may ride abreast, which leads to the centre of their line. The hedges that flank this passage are lined with archers, and the English main body itself consists of dismounted men-at-arms, arranged in the form of a *herse* or harrow. By this difficult passage alone can you approach the English position; consider, therefore, what is best to be done."

King John hearing this, determined to charge the English on foot, ordering all his men-at-arms to dismount, take off their spurs, and cut their spears to the length of five feet. Three hundred horsemen only were to remain mounted, in order to break the line of archers by a violent charge, and make way for the infantry.

Edward, on his part, drew up his forces, not in one division, as when seen by De Ribeaumont, but in three, with a detachment of cavalry apart, under the celebrated Captal de Buch, who was to take a compass round the hill during the fight, and fall on the rear of the French.

When about to engage, however, two legates from the Pope, Cardinals Talleyrand de Périgord and Capoccio, came into both the French and English camps, and used every endeavour to incline the two princes to peace. The Prince of Wales was so sensible of his critical situation that he made the most liberal offers. "Save my honour," he said, "and that of my army, and I will listen to anything." He proposed, indeed, to give up all the towns and castles which he had taken both in this and the former campaign, give up all his prisoners without ransom, and swear never again for seven years to bear arms against the King of France.

Never was a finer opportunity for securing a splendid triumph, in the surrender of so renowned an enemy; but John the Good again showed that he was not John the Wise. He was elated with the persuasion that he had the prince wholly in his power; and the very liberality of his offer only confirmed the fatal idea. He therefore insisted on the surrender of the prince and a hundred of his best knights, flattering himself that in holding them he held the restitution of Calais. The prince at once and indignantly rejected the proposal. The Christian efforts of the humane cardinals were abortive; the greater part of the day, which was Sunday, had been wasted in these negotiations. The prince's army was badly off for provisions for either man or horse; but they cheerfully spent the remainder of the day in strengthening their defences, and arranging their baggage behind them, as at Creçy.

The next morning, Monday, the 19th of September, the French army was again drawn out; and again Cardinal Talleyrand endeavoured to move the mind of the French king; but he repulsed him rudely. John had arranged his army in three divisions: the first commanded by his brother, the Duke of Orleans; the second by the dauphin, and two of his younger brothers; the third by the king himself, who had at his side his fourth and favourite son Philip, then about fourteen years of age. Edward, on the other hand, commanded the main body of his army, and placed the van under the Earl of Warwick. Just before the battle, Sir James Audley came before the prince and begged that he might begin the battle, in accordance with a vow he had made to do so in every battle of the prince's or of his father. The prince consented, and Sir James took his place with four stout esquires in the van; and thus the battle began.

The Marshals of France were ordered to advance and take possession of the lane leading to the English position, and scatter the archers who lined the hedges; but as fast as they entered the lane they were shot down. The horsemen, rapidly thinned, reached the end of the lane only to encounter the main body of the Black Prince's army. There Sir James Audley led on the charge, beating down all who approached. At the same instant the detachment of Captal de Buch, attended by 600 bowmen, made their attack on the flank of the dauphin's division. This movement threw the whole division into confusion. The archers shot so well and thickly that the dauphin's second division dispersed in haste. The knights, alarmed for their horses left in the rear, were the first to run from their banners, and all was instantly one scene of flight. The dauphin and his brother were escorted from the spot by 800 lances, and the army of the Black Prince seeing this, and that the Duke of Orleans was in full retreat with his vanguard, sprang to their saddles, shouting, "St. George for Guienne!" and Sir John Chandos exclaimed to the Prince, "Sire, ride forward; the day is won! Let us charge on the King of France, for well I know that he is too bold to flee.

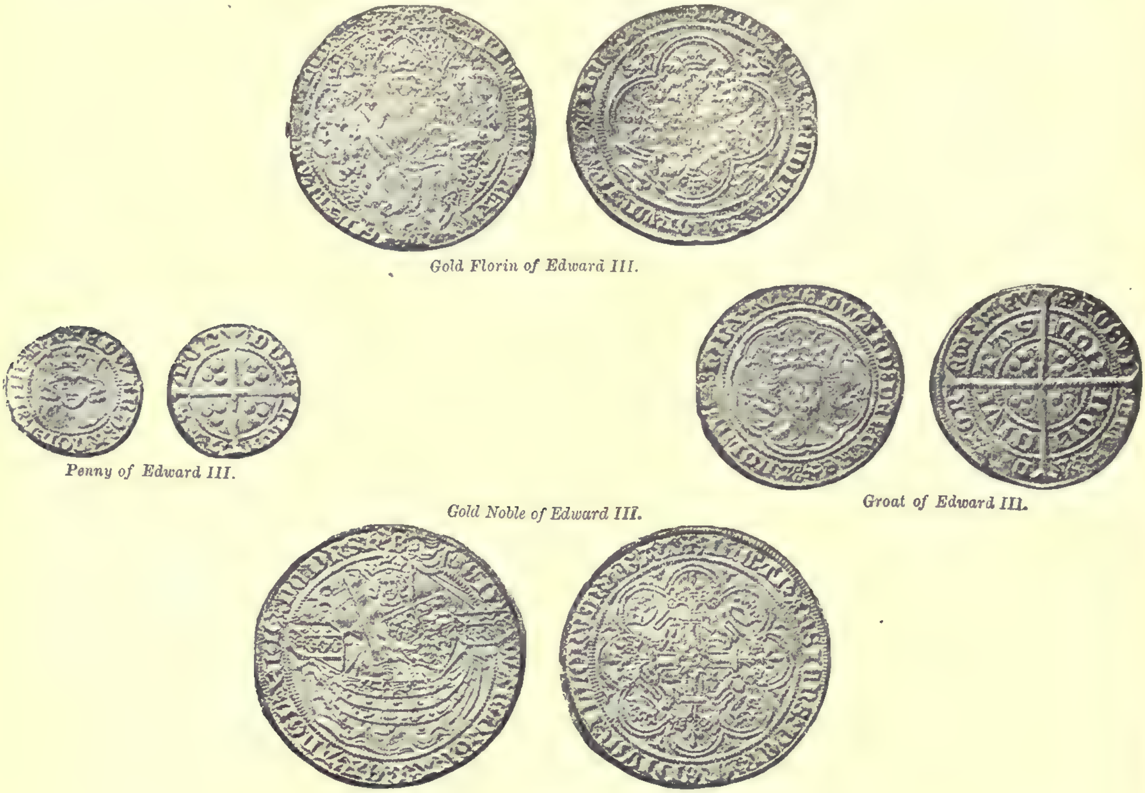
and there only will the battle be; and we shall take him, please God and St. George!" "Advance banners, in the name of God and St. George!" cried the prince, and they dashed down the lane, bearing all before them, riding over dead and wounded, till they came out on the plain where the king yet stood with his division, and they burst upon them with a fearful shock. But the king stood his ground, fighting manfully, leading up his division on foot, and hewing his way with his battle-axe; so that, says Froissart, had the knights of King John fought as well, the issue of the day might have been different. The Constable of France stood firmly by his sovereign with his squadron of horse, shouting "Mountjoy, St. Denis!" but before the impetuous onset of the English men-at-arms, his troops were cut down and himself was slain. Then the Prince of Wales attacked a body of German cavalry, and there was a desperate conflict; but the German generals were all killed, and then the cavalry gave way and left the king almost alone. Still the king fought on, and refused to surrender, though his few remaining followers were fast falling, and his nobles one after another sank around him. His son, the boy of fourteen, fighting bravely in defence of his father, was wounded, and the king might easily have been slain, but every one was anxious to take him alive. Several who attempted to seize him he felled to the ground. When called upon to yield, he still cried out, "Where is my cousin, the Prince of Wales?" unwilling to surrender to any one of less rank. A knight from St. Omer, who had been banished for homicide, said, "Sire, the prince is not here; but I will conduct you to him." "But who are you?" demanded the king; and the answer came, "I am Denis de Morbecque, a knight of Artois, but serving the King of England because I cannot belong to France, having been banished thence." "I surrender to you," said the king, giving his glove to Sir Denis. But there was violent struggling for possession of the king, every one saying, "I took him," and some of the rude soldiers declaring that they would kill him if not surrendered to them. At this moment arrived the Earl of Warwick, sent by the Black Prince to discover what was become of the king, and he conducted John and his son with great respect to the prince's tent.

Thus terminated the battle of Poitiers, one of the most wonderful victories ever achieved, being won by an army numerically only one-sixth of that which it defeated, and fighting under the disadvantage of being surrounded in the enemy's country, and against the King of France in person, with all his chivalry. Thus stood King John, a captive, at the end of the fight, where, without striking a single blow, he might have expelled the English army from his soil, and bound the Prince of Wales to a peace of seven years.

The true glory, therefore, of the Black Prince was that, so far from taunting John with this, he received him with the utmost courtesy. He advanced from his tent to meet the captive king with every mark of respect and regard. He bade him not think too much of the fortune of war, but to bear in mind that he had won the admiration of both armies, and the fame of the bravest man who had fought on that side. He caused a banquet to be spread in his tent for the king and his son. Edward refused to sit down at the table, as being only a vassal of the King of France. He said, "You shall find my father ready to show you all honour and friendship, and you shall, if you will, become such friends as you have never yet been." The king was so much touched by the respect and kindness of Edward, that he declared, though defeated, it was no loss of honour to yield to a prince of such consummate valour and generosity.

The attendants of the king are said to have been affected to tears by the noble conduct and consoling words of the prince to their royal master, and the spirit spread through the army towards all the prisoners. Edward also showed the same spirit of justice and liberality towards others. He presented to Sir James Audley 500 marks of yearly revenue for his services in the action; and when he found that he had transferred the whole of it to his four squires, he again settled £400 yearly upon him. He also heard all the eager and conflicting claims respecting the capture of the king, the distinction and the ransom being alluring objects; and finally adjudged it impartially, not to any of his own great barons, but to the poor French exile Sir Denis de Morbecque.

The prince conducted his royal prisoner to Bordeaux, whence, in the following April, he set sail with him and his son for London. They made their entrance into the English capital on the 24th of that month, 1357, landing at Southwark, whence they rode in procession through the city of Westminster, vast crowds attending them all the way to satiate their wonder at the novel spectacle of the monarch of France riding there as a captive. He was clad in his royal robes, and mounted on a white steed of remarkable size and beauty; while the Prince of Wales rode by his side, clad in a much plainer dress, and on a black palfrey. This might, to our present ideas, have appeared an aping of humility; but it was doubtless dictated to the prince by a chivalrous courtesy, and presented a fine contrast to the savage pomp of a Roman triumph, in which great kings and queens, amid all the spoils of their ravaged realms, were made to walk in chains, while the proud conqueror rode in his chariot blazing with gold.



Gold Florin of Edward III.

Penny of Edward III.

Gold Noble of Edward III.

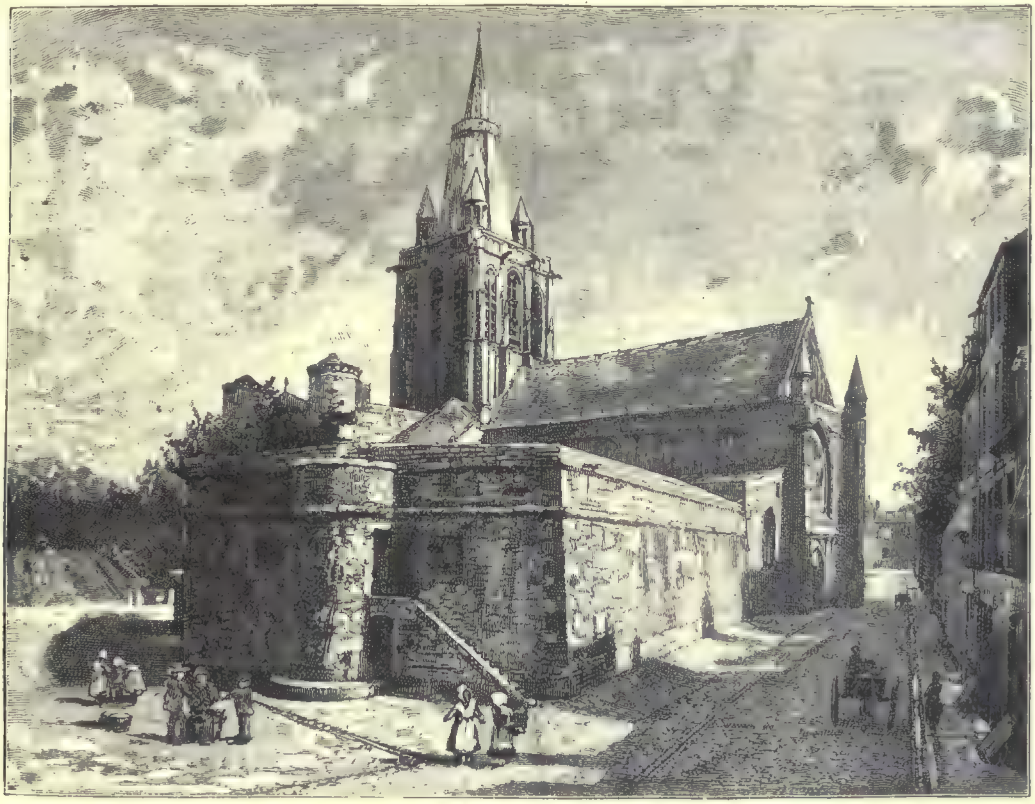
Groat of Edward III.

COINS OF THE REIGN OF EDWARD III.

It was, indeed, a time of singular triumph to the English people, for there were now two captive kings, those of France and Scotland, in their metropolis. Edward III. advanced to meet King John at the gates of his palace with the greatest courtesy, and received him, not as a prisoner, but as a neighbouring potentate arrived on a social visit.

The King of Scots had now been a captive in England eleven years. There had been no want of endeavours on the part of the Scots or of the King of England to effect his liberation. During the early portion of David's captivity this was not so much the case, because there was a strong leaning in him towards the French alliance—a natural result of his nine years' kind entertainment in that kingdom in his early youth. But his sojourn in England produced as decided an attachment to the English; and Edward, perceiving this, was willing to have on the throne of Scotland a friend who might counteract the hostile tendency of the nobles. During the last six years various negotiations had been entered into with the Scots for the release of David, but the ransom was considered by them too high. In 1351 this cause broke off the treaty: in 1354 the Scots agreed to give a ransom of 90,000 marks, payable in nine years. But their French allies, dreading an amicable state of things between Scotland and England, having lately lost Calais, and being then threatened with a fresh invasion by the English, induced the Scots to break the agreement. The effect of this measure was speedily seen in an invasion of England by the Scots, which compelled Edward to return from Normandy, and was followed by his celebrated raid, called the "Burnt Candlemas," into Scotland. Now, however, a treaty was concluded, in which the Scots consented to pay 100,000 marks in ten years, giving hostages for the due fulfilment of this compact. In November of this year, 1357, David was restored to liberty, and returned to his kingdom; and, before reverting to the prosecution of the war with France, we may briefly state what were the consequences of this transaction.

It soon became evident that the abode of David at the English court had produced the same effect as that formerly made upon him by his residence in the court of France. His facile and amiable but weak mind had been completely won over by Edward, who now saw, as he imagined, a quieter and more effectual mode of securing the crown of Scotland than by war. David had lost his wife, the sister of Edward, but had no children. He had grown fonder of the more polished and luxurious court of England than of his own ruder country and turbulent nobles. He did not, therefore, hesitate, after the death of his wife, to propose to the Scottish Parliament that, in case of his dying without issue, Edward's third son, the Duke of Clarence, should succeed him. The Scots, of course, rejected the proposal without ceremony. Still it was well known that a secret treaty existed between David and Edward III. for this object. In 1371 David died, and Robert Stewart, the grandson of Robert Bruce, by David's eldest sister, Marjory, succeeded to the throne, by the full consent of the Scottish Parliament, under the title of Robert II. Though Edward menaced, he never asserted his new claim to the crown, for his hands were full with the French war, and soon after, the death of his son, the Black Prince, put an end to all such ideas. From that time to the reign of James VI., a period of 232 years, the Stewarts continued to reign, when they also succeeded to the crown of England, and thus prepared the way for the ultimate and entire union of the kingdoms.


THE CHURCH OF NOTRE DAME, CALAIS.

The battle of Poitiers filled up the measure of the calamities of France. Creçy was a decisive blow; the loss of Calais was another. But these were still only a minor portion of the losses and miseries which had been crowding upon her through ten years of invasion. Normandy, Artois, Picardy, and the southern provinces of France had been repeatedly traversed by hostile armies, their fields laid waste, their cattle driven off or destroyed, their crops trodden under foot, their cities, towns, and villages burnt or pillaged. By sea and by land France had suffered defeat and heavy loss of men, ships, and property. At Sluys, in mid-Channel, and on various parts of the coast, the English had destroyed her fleets. In defending her ally of Brittany, Charles of Blois, her treasures had been largely drawn upon; and now came this desolating overthrow, in which the flower of her nobility was crushed or made captive with their king.

That captivity let loose all the elements of disorder which had been accumulating through these terrible years. The people were impoverished, and numbers of them utterly ruined; all were wretched and discontented. The nobles were grown arrogant with the weakness of the state, and the country was overrun with bands of armed marauders, calling themselves "Free Companies," who preyed at will on the already sorely fleeced people, committing every species of outrage, and thus aggravating awfully the miseries of the nation.

The dauphin was only a youth of eighteen, and, though possessed of superior talents, and unusual prudence and spirit for his age, was necessarily destitute of that authority and that experience which such a crisis required, and his two younger brothers could afford him no assistance in so difficult a position. Besides the want of support from members of his own family, he had a most dangerous and indefatigable enemy in his relative, the King of Navarre, who possessed that determined disposition to mischief which most truly entitled him to the name given him by the people, Charles the Bad.

The latter was still in prison, but he found means through stone walls to exercise his talents for intrigue, treachery, and malicious machinations. Pretending even to the crown, he had all the seditious arts and fiery recklessness of the demagogue; and he stooped to ally himself with any malcontent class, or to work with any dirty tool. Accordingly, when the dauphin called together the States-General of the kingdom, to enable him to obtain supplies, and reasonably imagining that he should find all classes, under the calamitous condition of the country, ready to unite with him for the restoration of the king and the re-establishment of order, he was met by demands for the limitation of the royal prerogative, the punishment of past offenders, and, especially, for the release of the King of Navarre.

Undoubtedly there were many evils to redress, and abuses of the royal power to complain of; but this was not the time when honourable men would have sought to enforce these objects. It was taking a cowardly advantage of the unfortunate position of a mere youth, to wrest from him what he had no legal authority to yield. Brave and upright men would have brought back the monarch, and from him demanded those measures which justice and the circumstances of the kingdom required. But what should have been reform was dastardly and lawless faction, and the very naming of the King of Navarre, the evil genius of France, betrayed its real origin. Marcel, the provost of the merchants, was the determined tool of Charles of Navarre; he put himself at the head of the mob, and endeavoured to terrify the dauphin into submission to his demands. The States-General, influenced by the same spirit, demanded the entire change of the king's ministers, and the punishment of several of them; and, dividing itself into separate committees, attempted to usurp the different departments of the executive. The dauphin was only to act under the control of a council of thirty-six members of the States-General, in which were to reside the powers of the whole body, and the King of Navarre was at once to be liberated. The dauphin temporised with the art of a much older man, till he had obtained some supplies, with which he proposed to put down disorders in the provinces, and then he dissolved the States, in spite of the citizens of Paris, headed by Marcel.

Freed from this millstone about his neck, Charles despatched Robert de Clermont, a brave commander, into Normandy against Godfrey de Harcourt, who was again gone over to the English, in resentment for the execution of his brother, Count Harcourt, as one of the adherents of the factious King of Navarre.

Robert de Clermont came up with Godfrey near Coutances, in November, 1356, and not only routed his forces, but slew him. Soon after this a truce was made with the English in Normandy; but still the captains of Edward pursued their predatory career in Brittany and Gascony. To complete the mischief, the King of Navarre was released from his prison, and received with rapture by the disaffected people of Amiens and Paris. He harangued the people in those cities, and seemed, by the drift of his speeches, to aim at a republic. His brother, Philip of Navarre, remained in the English camp, and denounced the idea of a republic as pregnant with disorder, mutability, and bloodshed.

Charles, the dauphin, was compelled to call the States-General together again, to demand fresh taxes for the prosecution of the war; but Marcel, the democratic provost, uniting with the King of Navarre, opposed all his measures, and excited the people to violence. He caused them to assume red caps, as a badge of their adherence to his party, which, from its co-operation with Charles of Navarre, was also called the Navarrese party.

Matters now ripened apace from anarchy into civil war. In February, 1358, a man of the name of Macé, having murdered the treasurer of France, took refuge in a church. The dauphin ordered him to be fetched thence, and put to death. But when Robert de Clermont and John de Conflans, the marshals of Champagne and Normandy went to execute this command, the Bishop of Paris protested against it as a violation of the sanctuary of the church; and Marcel, seizing so admirable an opportunity for bearding the dauphin, marched with the whole mob of Paris to his palace, then called the Palais de Justice. Entering without any regard to the person of the dauphin, he seized the two marshals and put them to death so close to the prince that his dress was sprinkled with their blood. "How now," cried the dauphin; "will you shed the blood royal of France?" Marcel replied, "No;" and, to show his pacific intentions, he clapped his own red cap on the head of the dauphin. The bodies of the murdered marshals were dragged through the streets.

Thus the capital of France was reduced to the utmost anarchy. The dauphin returned into Picardy and Champagne, where he assembled the estates of those provinces, and was aided by them to the best of their ability. But all France was one scene of discord, insurrection, violence, and crime. The mercenary and predatory bands of the Companies, many of whom, or, at least, their leaders, were English, were engaged by the King of Navarre to carry out his projected revolution. The dauphin, on the other side, assembled forces to oppose him; and now broke out one of the most frightful calamities which can afflict a nation—that of a peasants' war. In the reign of Richard II. in England, some few years after this time, our own country was on the verge of such a horrible state of things, under Wat Tyler and Jack Straw. At the time of the Reformation, Germany experienced its unspeakable atrocities, under the name of the Bauern Krieg, or War of the Peasantry, and France now was doomed to drink deeply of its demon horrors, under the name of the *Jacquerie*, from the gentry being used to call the peasant Jacques Bonhomme, or Goodman James.

The country people, ground by a long course of exaction, oppression, and insult, treated more as beasts than men by their feudal lords, now seized the moment when the Government were beset with difficulties and enemies to take a blind, sweeping, and tremendous vengeance. The nobility and the petty gentry holding fiefs under them had all been accustomed to plunder, tread on, and abuse the peasantry as a race of inferior creatures. The feudal system had run to seed in unbridled licence, and in every species of infuriating wrong. Ignorant and outraged, the people, once broken loose, placed no limits to their cruelties and revenge. They despised the nobles who, while they had oppressed them, had, in base cowardice, deserted their sovereign at Poitiers. Formerly crushed down into slaves, they were now terrible masters. They burnt and laid waste the country everywhere, plundered the villages, and cut off the supplies of the terrified towns.

They attacked the castles of the nobles, burnt them to the ground, chased the once proud owners, like wild beasts, into the woods, committed horrors, which cannot be named, on the helpless women, murdered them and the children without mercy, and, as in Germany afterwards, actually roasted some of their former harsh lords before slow fires.

Of the frightful situation to which the highest ladies of the country were reduced, Froissart gives a striking example. The Duchess of Normandy, the Duchess of Orleans, and nearly 300 ladies, young girls, and children, had fled for refuge to the strong town of Meaux, and were besieged by 9,000 or 10,000 of the furious Jacquerie, when they were threatened with every horror that human nature could endure. Fortunately, two famous knights of the directly opposite parties, the Count of Foix and the brave Captal de Buch, who made the successful rear assault at the battle of Poitiers, hearing of the alarming situation of these high ladies, forgot their hostility, united their forces, and, falling on the Jacquerie, put them to the sword, killing 7,000 of them, and rescuing the terrified women.

The dauphin, on his part, did not spare the insurgents. He cut them down like sheep wherever he could meet with them. In one case he is said to have killed more than 20,000 of them. The nobles, in Picardy and Artois, mowed them down like grass, and soon cleared that part of the country of them. Everywhere the knights and gentry, roused by the ferocious deeds of the Jacquerie towards their families, collected and, easily overcoming the undisciplined mobs, slaughtered them in heaps, like beasts. At the same time, Marcel, endeavouring to complete his crime by betraying Paris to the King of Navarre and the English, was killed by the exasperated people, and thus the land was eventually reduced to quiet. But it was a quiet like that described by the Roman historian:—"*Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*" ("They make a solitude, and call it peace.") No country was ever reduced to a more awful condition of ruin and wide-spread desolation; this frightful Jacquerie pest lasted nearly two years.

THE CATHEDRAL, COUTANCES.

Meantime Edward had worked on his captive, King John of France, to make a peace, restoring to England all the provinces which had belonged to Henry II. and his two sons, for ever; but the dauphin and the States rejected the treaty, which would have totally ruined the kingdom. On this Edward once more invaded that devoted country, assembled an army of 100,000 men, with which he overran Picardy and Champagne, besieged Rheims, but without success, advanced into Burgundy, marched into Nivernais, and laid waste Brie and Gatinais, and sat down before Paris, where, not being able to draw the dauphin into a battle, he proceeded to devastate the province of Maine. It is said that his desolating career was at length closed by a terrible thunder-storm by which he was overtaken near Chartres, in which the terrors of heaven seemed to his awe-struck imagination to be arrayed against him. "Looking towards the church of Notre Dame at Chartres," says Froissart, "he made a vow to grant peace, which he afterwards humbly repeated in confession in the cathedral of Chartres, and thus took up his lodging in the village of Bretigny, near that city."

Here the peace was concluded on these conditions: the King of France was to pay three millions of gold crowns for his ransom—about a million and a half of our money; he was also to yield up to Edward in full sovereignty the province of Gascony, Guienne, the whole of Poitou, and other dependencies in Aquitaine, and in the north of France, Calais, Guisnes, Montreuil, and the country of Ponthieu. Edward, on the other hand, was to renounce all other French territory, and all claim to the crown and kingdom of France. The King of Navarre was to be restored to all his honours and possessions, and the alliances of Edward with the Flemings and of John with the Scots were to close. In consequence of the peace of Bretigny, signed the 24th of October, 1360, John returned to France; but finding that his government was unwilling to keep faith with England, and that his son, the Duke of Anjou, had broken his parole as a hostage, John, with a noble sense of honour, refused to be a party to such dishonesty and, returning voluntarily to his captivity in London, died there on the 8th of April, 1364.

MARCEL AND THE DAUPHIN OF FRANCE. (*See p.* 435.)

Charles V., the fifty-first monarch of France, succeeded his father John to a kingdom, desolate but not dismembered. John had, indeed, added to the realm the provinces of Dauphiné and Burgundy; but the latter he again dissevered from the crown and settled on his favourite son, Philip, his companion at the battle of Poitiers and in his captivity. This unwise act, the result, not of prudence—in which John was singularly deficient—but of affection, became the source of much contention and many miseries.

Charles had been early taught in the school of adversity, and he soon displayed proofs that he had profited by its lessons. He was cautious, thoughtful how to retrieve the condition of France, and eventually won the name of the Wise. Had his designation been the Worldly Wise it would have been still more correct, for he was not too strict in interpreting the code of honour where it interfered with his plans. He was the first of his race and his times who renounced the practice of leading his armies, deeming it more befitting a monarch to head his kingdom, and place over his armies the ablest commanders whom he could obtain, as he would place the ablest ministers over the different departments of his Government. This very circumstance marks Charles as a sagacious prince. The practice was a step onward in governmental science.

Charles deemed it necessary to reduce the disorders of his own kingdom before he commenced his intended operations against the English. It was necessary to put down Charles of Navarre, and to settle the affairs of Brittany. To do this, he first sent the young Breton knight, Bertrand du Guesclin, destined to acquire a great renown in this reign, into Normandy, where the brave Captal de Buch, the hero of Poitiers, commanded the King of Navarre's forces. These two commanders met near Cocherel, where Du Guesclin turned the tide of war in favour of France, gaining the first complete victory for it since the days of Creçy, and not only routed De Buch, but took him prisoner.

Du Guesclin then marched into Brittany, where Lord Chandos and Sir Hugh Calverley were in command of the English forces. Here Du Guesclin's good fortune deserted him; he was defeated and taken prisoner. Here, also, Charles of Blois was slain, and the young De Montfort secured in his possessions. The prudence of Charles V. was now seen conspicuously; instead of resuming the war, he acknowledged De Montfort as rightful lord of the duchy, though a strong partisan of England, admitted him to do homage for the fief, and thus bound him in a certain degree to him by kindness—a display of political philosophy too much neglected by Edward III. of England and his son, the Black Prince.

Finding the estates of the crown greatly reduced by weak grants made by his father and former monarchs to the princes and nobles about them, he set himself to reclaim them, and thus restore the national finances—an undertaking which would have ruined a weak or imprudent king. But he prosecuted this design with such consummate address and persuasive mildness—showing its absolute necessity if France were to enable herself to shake off the incubus of the English, and beginning with his own uncle, the Duke of Orleans—that he carried it through triumphantly. This done, he proceeded to rid the nation of the bands of Free Companies which preyed on the very vitals of the kingdom. At the peace of Bretigny the disbanded soldiery of Edward, men from almost every European country, being scattered over the land, and being in possession of many of the strongholds, refused to lay down their arms. They were accustomed to a life of the utmost licence under the English king and prince, and they determined to continue it. Both English and Gascon officers now took the command of these freebooters, who became the scourge of the provinces. Sir Hugh Calverley, Sir Matthew Gournay, and the Chevalier Verte, were their most distinguished leaders. These troops amounted to 40,000, and did not fear to encounter the armies of France. They fought with them and beat them, and killed Jacques de Bourbon, a prince of the blood. The more they spoiled and ravaged, the more their numbers grew, for they were increased by those who sought for booty, and by those who were left without any other resource. People flocked to them precisely as they did in ancient times to David, in the cave of Adullam: "Every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him." The Pope excommunicated them; but though that ban, so awful in that age, alarmed, it did not disperse them.

Charles at first complained to Edward warmly that his forces were not disbanded according to the treaty, and called upon him to see them dispersed; but when Edward, finding proclamations for the purpose unheeded, declared that he would himself march against them, Charles took alarm at the prospect of seeing an English army again on the soil of France, and hastened to request him to spare himself that trouble—he would deal with them in his own way. His mode of ridding himself of them was worthy of his enlightened mind. He used all his persuasion to engage them in foreign wars. He represented to them what a rich field the wars of Italy presented to them; and a large body, under one Hawkwood, an Englishman, proceeded thither, and won great wealth and distinction. Fortune favoured the plans of the king, and opened a still wider field of action to the troublesome Free Companies. Pedro, the king of Castile at that time, was one of the most bloody monsters who ever disgraced a throne. He indulged his savage disposition by the murder of his own near relations and the nobles about the court. He had put to death several of his natural brothers for fear of their conspiring against him. The murder of one noble led him to that of others, who he dreaded might attempt retaliation. His court was become a perfect hell of blood and terror, and that terror alone prevented his dethronement. But, instigated by Mary de Padilla, his mistress, he poisoned his wife, the sister of the queen of Charles of France.

At this Enrique, Count of Trastamare, and Tello, Count of Biscay, his natural brothers, who had taken arms against him in vain, fled to the court of France, and implored Charles to avenge the sister of his queen, and rid the country of this modern Nero.

Charles embraced the proposal as the evident beckoning hand of a good Providence. He procured the liberty of Du Guesclin, who was still a prisoner to Lord Chandos, and set him to bring over the chiefs of the Companies to take command under him for a feigned expedition against the Moors in Spain, which was regarded as a crusade against the infidels. The Pope, who had his cause of quarrel with the monster Pedro, gave his blessing to the scheme, and Du Guesclin speedily found himself at the head of 30,000 of these desperadoes. The King of France gave them 200,000 francs; and, assembling at Châlons, on the river Marne, they marched towards Avignon. The Pope, who then resided there, alarmed at the approach of such a force, sent a cardinal to learn their object in coming that way. Du Guesclin answered that as they were bound on a crusade against the enemies of the Church, they sought the Pope's blessing, and the small sum of 200,000 florins to help them on their way. His holiness readily promised the blessing and absolution of all their sins—an awful score! But Du Guesclin replied that his followers were of that description that they would, if necessary, dispense with the absolution, but not with the money. The Pope then proposed to levy the sum of 100,000 florins on the inhabitants, but Du Guesclin said they were not come to oppress the innocent people, but would expect the money out of the Pope's own coffers. His holiness thought it well to comply with a request backed by such arguments as 30,000 notorious banditti, and the bold beggars marched on. They very soon drove the tyrant from his throne and kingdom, who fled, with his two daughters, into Guienne, and put himself under the protection of the Black Prince.

In all the wars of Edward III. against Scotland and France he had shown an utter disregard of right; and in this respect he was fully seconded by the Black Prince; but of all their undertakings none so flagrantly outraged every principle of justice, humanity, and chivalry as their abetting this demon in human shape, Don Pedro of Castile. Here was a man steeped in the blood of his own family and of his own wife; a man who had oppressed and plundered his subjects till they hated him with a mortal hatred, and had joined in chasing him from the country; yet Edward—though a professed champion of chivalry, and as such bound to defend and redress the grievances of women—at once undertook to restore the murderer of his wife to his ensanguined throne, and to force him again on a people whom he had driven to desperation by his ferocious tyrannies. It has been attempted to vindicate this action by representing Don Pedro as the *legitimate* sovereign, whom, therefore, the prince, as an upholder of legitimate authority, was bound to support. But the fact is that Edward and his father had all their lives been engaged in endeavouring, by all the force of their talents and the resources of their kingdom, to destroy legitimacy in the person of the King of France. It has been again urged that the King of France sanctioning the expedition to dethrone Don Pedro naturally aroused the rivalry of the Black Prince, who would probably, say these authors, never have succoured the infamous Pedro had not the King of France taken the other side. But the worst of it is, that the King of France was on the right side, the just and honourable one—that of punishing a murderer of his own relative, and of assisting an oppressed people. The Prince of Wales was on the wrong side—the odious one of abetting as foul a monster as ever disgraced humanity; and his proceeding was as impolitic as it was unjust, for it raised a new enemy, the reigning King of Castile, Don Enrique, and threw him into the alliance of France. The conduct of the Black Prince in this affair proved that, with all his personal virtues, he was destitute of that high moral sense—that perception of what is intrinsically great and noble — which stamps the true hero; and the hand of Providence appears speedily and unequivocally to have displayed itself against him and his father, who sanctioned his fatal enterprise. All his wisest and most faithful counsellors urged him to reflect on the crimes and blood-stained character of Don Pedro; to remember that such men were as ungrateful as they were base; and also that the expedition must be attended by severe charges on the province of Gascony, already loudly complaining of its burthens.

These just admonitions were all lost on the prince. He assembled a force, recalling his officers from the bands of the Companies, 12,000 of whom, on learning that he was about to take the field, left Du Guesclin, headed by Sir Hugh Calverley, and Sir Robert Knowles, and followed his banners, believing in the ascendency of his fortune, and careless of every other motive. The Prince of Wales came into action with the troops of Don Enrique and Du Guesclin at Navarrete, routed them with a loss of 20,000 men, and easily reinstated the tyrant upon the throne. But there the success of the Black Prince ceased. He could not make the monster Pedro anything but a monster; and Pedro immediately displayed his diabolical disposition by proposing to the prince to murder all their prisoners in cold blood, which the prince indignantly refused.

And now the punishment of the Prince of Wales for this unhappy deed—a foul blot for ever on his brilliant escutcheon—came fast and heavily upon him; so fast, so heavily, so palpably, that the writers of the time plainly ascribed it to the displeasure of Providence. The tyrant, once restored, gave Prince Edward immediate proof of the miserable work he had done, by refusing to fulfil a single stipulation that he had made. He left the prince's army without the pay so liberally promised, and without provisions. The prince was exposed to the murmurs of his deluded soldiers. The heat of the climate and strange and unwholesome food began to sweep them off in great numbers, whilst his own health gave way, never to be restored. He made his way back to Bordeaux as well as he could, where he arrived in July, 1367, with a ruined constitution, and covered with debts, incurred on behalf of the ungrateful tyrant. To discharge the debt due to his troops, he laid a tax on hearths, not unknown in England, but new to the Gascons, which was calculated to produce 1,200,000 francs a year. But the inhabitants resented this tax on their chimneys, or *feuage*, as they called it, excessively. It was the climax to a host of grievances of which they began vehemently to clamour—as, for example, that all offices and honours were conferred on foreigners; and that their treatment was harsh, like that of a conquered people. As the Black Prince paid no attention to their complaints, the nobles of the district carried them to the King of France, as their ancient lord paramount.

While the Prince of Wales was thus about to be embroiled with France, on account of his ill-fated restoration of Don Pedro, he had the mortification to learn that that savage had only regained his throne to wreak the most diabolical cruelties on his subjects, whom he now regarded as rebels. Du Guesclin, having obtained his ransom, once more joined Enrique de Trastamare to expel the despot. He defended himself with desperate valour, but he was eventually defeated. As he had only about a dozen men with him, Don Pedro attempted to steal away at night, but he was seized by a French officer; and such was the implacable fury of the two brothers against each other, that, as soon as Don Enrique heard of his capture, he flew to the tent where he was in custody. There, after insulting and irritating each other, the two proceeded to a deadly struggle, in which Don Enrique stabbed Pedro to the heart with his dagger.

Such were the fruits for which the Prince of Wales had sacrificed his honour—his life, as it proved—and the peace of his provinces. The wary Charles V. had long been eagerly watching the proceedings of the English. He had on various pretences deferred the fulfilment of the conditions of the treaty of Bretigny, and now, on the plea that it was void, he summoned the Black Prince to Paris, as his vassal, to answer the complaints of his subjects. The treaty of Bretigny liberated the English provinces from all feudal subjection, and made them independent. When the heralds conveyed the summons to the Black Prince, his eyes flamed with indignation at this breach of faith; he looked furiously on the messengers, and exclaimed, "Is it even so? Does our fair cousin desire to see us at Paris? Gladly will we go thither; but I assure you, sirs, that it shall be with our basnets on our heads, and at the head of 60,000 men."

The messengers dropped on their knees in terror, begging him to remember that they only did the message of him who sent them. But the prince, deigning them no word, left them in wrath, and the courtiers ordered them to get away as fast as they could; but the prince, hearing of their departure, sent after them and brought them back, but did them no injury.

Thus were England and France once more plunged into war through the ill-timed restoration of a base tyrant; with general discontent in the English provinces in the south of France, and the health of the prince fast failing. The French king had carefully calculated the declining vigour of Edward III., as well as the health of his son; and now he advanced to regain the territories he had lost, and to avenge the mortal injuries which his country had suffered from the English. Circumstances were highly favourable to Charles. Discontent prevailed in the English provinces, and there was disunion amongst the commanders of the forces. On his own side he had with him the wishes of the whole country. Many of the great commanders who had assisted to win the proud laurels of Edward and the Black Prince were dead, or sunk into old age. The Free Companies who had served under the Black Prince were dismissed from the want of that very pay which the tyrant Pedro had refused, and were now eagerly engaged by the French king. The feudal troops and the archery of England, the very soul of the army, had returned home at the end of the war, and it would now require much time and expenditure of money to collect them again.

THE BLACK PRINCE AND THE FRENCH KING'S HERALDS. (*See p.* 440.)

On the other hand, a new generation had sprung up in France, who had not known the terrors of Creçy or Poitiers, but only had heard of the defeat of France and the death of their fathers, and burned to avenge them. The terrible King of England was old; his lion-hearted son was known to be sinking into the grave. It seemed as if the doom of heaven was pronounced on the power of the English. They had overrun and destroyed, but taken no pains to conciliate, and the hatred which flamed in the hearts of the people was fanned and made holy by the universal voice of the clergy, producing everywhere revolt from the English, and adhesion to the French monarch. Charles had prepared for this crisis for years, husbanding his income till he was called not only the Wise, but the Wealthy; and the people, now kindled with the spirit of patriotism, submitted cheerfully to new taxes for reconquering the independence of their country, even to that same *feuage* which, imposed in Gascony, had cost the Prince of Wales his popularity; so much does the payment of a tax depend on the person who imposes it, and the purpose for which it is demanded.

Still the Black Prince, though ill, was not cast down. Some of the Free Companies, in spite of the defection of their fellows, joined him to the number of 6,000 lances, under the brave Sir Hugh Calverley; and Edward III. sent from England a considerable army, under the command of the Earl of Cambridge, the prince's fourth brother, and Sir John Hastings, the Earl of Pembroke, his brother-in-law.

The King of France fell on the province of Ponthieu, which gave the English admittance into the heart of France. The people everywhere received him with open arms, showing how completely all the efforts of England to conquer France had been thrown away. The citizens of Abbeville opened their gates to him. Those of the neighbouring towns followed their example, and in a very little time the whole country was regained by the French.

In Poitou the brothers of Charles, the Dukes of Berri and Anjou, assisted by the gallant Du Guesclin, were equally successful. Lord Audley, the son of that Sir James Audley who distinguished himself so greatly at the battle of Poitiers, who was seneschal of the province, fell sick and died in the very commencement of the war, to the extreme grief of the prince, who made the celebrated Sir John Chandos his successor. But jealousies amongst the commanders, now the Prince of Wales was unable to be at the head of his armies, produced disastrous consequences, and worse very soon followed in the death of the brave Chandos. That enterprising leader proposed to the Earl of Pembroke to join him in an expedition against Louis de Sancerre, the Marshal of France. But Pembroke, jealous of the fame of Sir John, and instigated by his flatterers, who insinuated that with such a renowned general the earl would come off with very little of the glory of the undertaking, declined the proposal. Sir John Chandos, disgusted by the refusal, retired into the city of Poitiers, and dismissed such troops as were not necessary for its defence.

No sooner had he done this, than the Earl of Pembroke issued forth with 200 spears to win distinction for himself, and waste the lands of the nobles who were opposed to the Black Prince's taxation. This was good news for the Marshal Sancerre, who had little fear when he learned that Chandos had retired in displeasure. He came suddenly with an overwhelming force on Pembroke, killed a considerable number of his knights, and compelled him to take refuge in an old church of the abolished Knights Templars. Pembroke, now awake to his folly, dispatched a messenger to Sir John Chandos for help. The messenger did not reach Poitiers till the next morning, when Sir John was at breakfast. On hearing Pembroke's appeal, he coolly went to mass, glad, no doubt, to let the envious nobleman feel the effects of his foolish conduct. Meantime the battle at the church was going on vigorously, the English stoutly defending their retreat, but feeling, from the thinness of the walls and want of provisions, that they could not hold out long. Another messenger was dispatched to Sir John, accompanied by a most earnest entreaty, and a valuable ring from the finger of the earl himself Sir John was at dinner when the messenger arrived, describing in earnest words the imminent danger of the earl and his followers. Sir John had not yet forgiven the young nobleman. He went on with his dinner, saying, "If it be as you say, nothing can save him." But anon, lifting up his head, he said to his knights and esquires around him, "Hear me, sirs! the Earl of Pembroke is a noble person, and of high lineage, son-in-law to our natural lord, the King of England. Foul shame were it to see him lost, if we can save him. I will go, by the grace of God."

Two hundred men-at-arms mounted in haste, and, Sir John at their head, galloped off to surprise the Marshal of Sancerre while besieging Pembroke in the Temple-house. But the wary French, apprised of the approach of Sir John, speedily drew off and escaped.

In December of the same year, 1370, Sir John Chandos lost his life in a confused skirmish, owing to want of proper co-operation among the English commanders; and his loss was soon obvious in a greater lack of spirit and success in the English army in the south of France; the gallant Captal de Buch, who preceded Sir John as seneschal of Guienne, being taken prisoner, and lost to the English service.

Meantime Edward III. had sent fresh forces to Calais, under his son, the Duke of Lancaster, commonly called John of Ghent, or Gaunt, in alliance with the Count of Namur. The King of France sent a still larger army to oppose the inroads of these forces under his brother Philip, the Duke of Burgundy, but commanded him on no account to come to a general engagement with the English, lest the fate of Creçy and Poitiers should once more overtake him. The duke posted himself between St. Omer and Tournay, where the Duke of Lancaster came out against him, but could not induce the French to fight. The Duke of Burgundy, impatient of this inglorious position, desired to be recalled, and the king ordered him to fall back on Paris. Then John of Gaunt advanced, pillaging and laying waste the country in the old English manner from Calais to Bordeaux, while Sir Robert Knowles, the Free Companies' leader, with an army of 30,000 men, took his way by Terouenne and through Artois, burning and destroying all before him. He next advanced to the very gates of Paris, up to which one of his knights rode, and struck a blow with his spear, having made a vow that he would strike his lance on the gate of Paris. The daring warrior, however, lost his life returning through the suburbs, being cut down by a gigantic butcher with his cleaver. After that Knowles marched into Brittany for winter quarters. On their march that fatal disunion which now infected the English army, once more showed itself. Lord Grandison, Lord Fitzwalter, and other English nobles, refused to follow Knowles into Brittany. They declared that it did not become noblemen like themselves to serve under a man of mean birth, as Sir Robert Knowles was, and they drew off their forces to Anjou and Touraine.

Bertrand du Guesclin, now made Constable of France, hearing of this disunion from an English traitor, pursued Knowles to cut him off. Knowles sent information of this pursuit to Lord Grandison, and his disdainful aristocratic companions; but too late, for Du Guesclin overtook them at Pont Volant, defeated them, and slew the greater part of these proud exclusives. Knowles made good his retreat into Brittany.

About this time the Black Prince performed his last military exploit; and it was one calculated to become an additional brand on his name in France. Limoges, the capital of Limousin, had been betrayed to the Dukes of Anjou and Berri by the bishop and the chief inhabitants. The prince was greatly enraged, both because the bishop had been his personal friend, and because he had conferred many privileges on the citizens. He was now too weak to mount a horse, but he ordered out 1,200 lancers and 2,000 archers and, being borne in an open litter at the head of his troops, advanced to take vengeance on Limoges. The garrison treated with scorn his summons to surrender. But his sappers soon undermined the wall, though Du Guesclin did all he could by a flying force to draw off his attention. Some authors say that he there used gunpowder, lately introduced, to blow up the mine, as they contend that his father used cannon in the battle of Creçy. Others say that he threw down the wall by burning the props which supported the excavation while in progress. Whatever was now the mode, he made a breach, and his troops, rushing in, perpetrated the most ruthless and indiscriminate slaughter. The poor people, men, women, and children, knelt in the streets, and threw themselves down before the prince, crying, "Mercy! mercy, for God's sake!" But the inexorable prince turned a deaf ear to these moving prayers from the innocent people who had nothing whatever to do with the surrender of the city, and 4,000 were put to death. The only pity which he showed was to the bishop who gave up the place, and to a knot of brave knights whom he found standing with their backs to a wall, engaged in mortal combat with his brothers the Dukes of Lancaster and Cambridge, and Pembroke, his brother-in-law. After watching their gallant defence some time in high admiration, he consented to accept their submission, and dismissed them with praises. This extraordinary man could still feel delight in the spectacle of a brave feat of arms, though his soul was become utterly callous to every sentiment of pity for his fellow men in general. He gave up the city to be sacked, and it was burnt to the ground.

In the early part of the following year he lost his eldest son, and his own health being now completely broken, he returned to England, quitting for ever the country where he had gained so much glory, and on which he had inflicted such extensive calamities. He left the Duke of Lancaster, his lieutenant, who maintained a court at Bordeaux as brilliant as that of the prince himself. At this court were residing the two daughters of the late Don Pedro the Cruel; and John of Gaunt, now a widower, but in the prime of his life, married Donna Constance, the eldest, and in her right assumed the title of King of Castile and Leon; and his brother, the Earl of Cambridge, married, at the same time, the second sister.

This, as we have said of the Black Prince's expedition into Castile to reinstate the tyrant Don Pedro, was a most false and calamitous policy, for it made a firm ally of Enrique, now reigning king of Castile, to Charles of France; and of this the effect was speedily felt.

John of Gaunt went over to England to introduce his royal bride at court there; and the Earl of Pembroke going out to supply his place in June, 1372, with a fleet of forty ships, was encountered off the port of La Rochelle by a powerful navy belonging to King Enrique. The battle was fiercely contested; but the Spanish ships were not only much larger than those of the English, but provided with cannon, now for the first time employed at sea. The English were completely defeated; the greater part of their ships were taken, burnt, or sunk, including one carrying the military chest, with £20,000. The Earl of Pembroke, with many other men of rank, remained prisoners.

Such was the immediate effect of the English alliance with the family of such a monster as Don Pedro; and nothing showed more completely the degree to which the English had made themselves detested in France than the eagerness with which the people of La Rochelle and its neighbourhood, though still English subjects, aided the Spaniards by every means in their power.

This defeat and loss laid open the country to the attacks of the King of France, through his valiant and wise constable, Du Guesclin, who took town after town. The Duke of Lancaster set sail from England with a fresh army, accompanied by the Earls of Suffolk, Warwick, Stafford, and Lord Edward Spencer, to repel the French forces. But these forces, divided into three hosts, under the Dukes of Burgundy and Bourbon, and Du Guesclin, still avoided any engagement, but watched the English army, harassed its rear, and cut off its foraging parties everywhere. In vain the Duke of Lancaster marched from Bordeaux to Calais and back; everywhere the enemy fled before him, and yet everywhere he suffered loss; so that the king, his father, declared, with irrepressible vexation "that there never was a monarch at once so little of a soldier and who contrived to give so much trouble." The last town possessed by the English in Gascony was Thouars, then a considerable place. The constable invested it, and the English lords shut up in it—the best of those whom the long series of skirmishes and sieges had left—agreed to surrender it at the next Michaelmas, if the King of England or one of his sons did not relieve them within that period. Edward, on hearing this, put to sea with a considerable army; but winds and waves were steadily opposed to him, and he was compelled to put back and leave Thouars to its fate. The last ally of Edward, the Count de Montfort, was driven from his duchy by Du Guesclin and Oliver de Clisson, and compelled to take refuge in England. The Duke of Lancaster marched to and fro, but gained no signal advantage; and Charles V., thinking that Edward's fortunes were too low again to reinstate the Count of Brittany, proposed to the estates of France to confiscate his territory, and annex it to the French crown; but this the nobles of Brittany opposed, and recalled John de Montfort from his exile in England.

In 1374, but two years previous to the death of the Black Prince, and three to the death of Edward himself, a truce was signed at Bruges between France and England for one year. The Pope, by his legates, who followed both armies, and attended both courts, had never remitted his Christian endeavours to put a stop to the barbarities of the war; but it was not till France had won almost all that it had lost that he could succeed. The truce was concluded, and was maintained till the death of the King of England; at which time all that was left of his French possessions were Bordeaux, Bayonne, a few towns on the Dordogne, and Calais in the north. Such were the miserable fruits of all the human blood and lives expended, and all the miseries inflicted in these unjust and impolitic wars of more than forty years' duration.

When the Black Prince returned to England, broken down in constitution, he found things far from agreeable. The king was become feeble, and ruled by favourites. Great abuses had sprung up and were carried on in the king's name. The Duke of Lancaster had created a strong party for himself, and exercised the principal power. The prince, still growing weaker, yet roused himself to restrain the domination of Lancaster, and remove his creatures from about the person of the king. The Commons, as is supposed, by direct encouragement of the prince, impeached nearly all the ministers. They removed the chamberlain, Lord Latimer, from the king's council, and put him in prison. They deprived Lord Neville of the offices which he held, and arrested several farmers of the customs. They even censured Alice Perrers, the King's mistress. The excellent Philippa had been dead several years, and this Alice Perrers, who had been a lady of the bedchamber to the

JOHN WYCLIFFE APPEARING IN ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL TO ANSWER THE CHARGE OF HERESY. (*See p.* 446.)

queen, had acquired the most complete influence over the old king. She was now banished from court. This Parliament was known as "The Good Parliament," but its efforts were, for the most part, fruitless.

Such were the unhappy affairs which clouded the last days of the celebrated Black Prince, and even tended to sow dissension between him and his father. He died on Trinity Sunday, the 8th of June, 1376, in the forty-sixth year of his age, to the immense regret of the people, who regarded his military achievements, though of no solid advantage to the nation, with a deep national pride, and, from his opposition to corruptions at home, esteemed him as a most patriotic prince. It is clear that he must have been of a naturally noble nature, and possessed of personal qualities as engaging as his courage and military genius were unrivalled; but his warlike education had blunted many of the finest feelings of the heart, and led him to become the scourge of France, and in a great measure useless to his own country. His body was drawn by twelve horses from London to Canterbury, the whole court and Parliament following through the city; and he was buried in the cathedral, near the shrine of Thomas Becket.

After his death the Duke of Lancaster recovered his ascendency in the state and over the king, who, grown indolent, and devoted only to the society of his artful mistress, paid little attention to State affairs. John of Gaunt hastened to undo all that the Black Prince had effected. He caused his own Steward, Sir Thomas Hungerford, to be made Speaker of the House of Commons. He restored his faction there, and soon had Sir Peter de la Mare, the late Speaker, arrested, and the celebrated William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, deprived of his temporalities, on charges of embezzlement which could not be proved, and dismissed from court. The duke went so far as not only to implore that the Lord Latimer, but Alice Perrers, should be freed from the censures passed upon them by the late Parliament in the name of the king, and restored to their former condition and privileges. The present Parliament, however, was not so completely packed by John of Gaunt but that it possessed a spirit of opposition, which insisted that the accused should be put upon their trial; and the bishops demanded the same justice towards William of Wykeham, one of the greatest men of the age, the architect of Windsor Castle, the founder of St. Mary's College at Winchester and of New College at Oxford.

It is said that we owe it to the resentment of John of Gaunt against the bishops that he took up so earnestly the cause of Wycliffe, the great English reformer, and thus became a most effectual champion and guardian of the Reformation. Wycliffe, who was a parish priest at this time, living at Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, and the prebendary of Aust, in the collegiate church of Westbury, in the diocese of Worcester, had been a member of a commission sent by Edward to Pope Gregory XI., which met at Bruges; and it is remarkable that this glimpse of the papal court is said to have had the same effect on him as the visit of Luther afterwards to Rome. He became a decided Church reformer, and being a teacher at Oxford, had ample opportunity of making public his ideas. His denunciation of Church abuses, and opposition to many of its doctrines, had caused him to be cited by a convocation of the clergy to appear at St. Paul's on the 3rd of February, 1377, to answer to the charges against him. Here he was attended by John of Gaunt and the Earl Marshal, Lord Percy. These noblemen and the bishops became mutually very hot on the question, and the Duke of Lancaster is reported to have threatened to drag Courtenay, the Bishop of London, who presided, by the hair of the head out of the church. A riot was the consequence, the Duke of Lancaster protecting Wycliffe; and the people, who were very jealous of Lancaster's overgrown power, resenting his insult to the bishop, broke into his house and that of Lord Percy, killing Lord Percy's chaplain, and doing immense damage to the duke's palace. The two noblemen escaped across the water to Kennington, where the widow of the Black Prince, the "Fair maid of Kent," and her son Richard, the heir apparent, resided. The riot ran so high that the debates of Parliament were interrupted, and the mob reversed the duke's arms as a traitor.

The king, completing the fiftieth year of his reign and the sixty-fourth of his life, published a general amnesty for all minor offences; still however, through the influence of Lancaster, excluding Wykeham of Winchester. He was now fast failing, and passed his time between Eltham Palace and his manor of Shene (or Sheen), near Richmond. The last days of this great monarch were like those of many others who during their lives ruled men with a high hand. They were desolate and deserted. Nobles and courtiers were now looking out for the rising sun, and paying it their assiduous adoration. By some this was held to be the Duke of Lancaster, against whose designs on the throne the people had called on the king, before the death of the Black Prince, to guard; and he had named his grandson Richard, then not six years old, his successor. By others Richard was deemed the true fountain of future favour, and all deserted the dying king, except his deeply interested mistress, who, after securing everything else of value that she could, drew the diamond ring from the finger of the dying monarch, and—departed. The servants had gone before to plunder the house, and only a solitary, faithful priest, preferring his duty to the things of this world, hastened to the bedside of the departing monarch, held aloft his crucifix, and remained in that position till the once mighty king had breathed his last.

Englishmen look with pride to the reign of Edward III., as one of those which stamped the martial ascendency of their race; and unquestionably it was an era of high military glory. But, beyond the glory, what was the genuine advantage won by Edward III. and his heroic son? Neither in France nor in Scotland, the scenes of his feats of arms, did he retain a foot of the land which he conquered, except Calais and its little circle of environs. In fact, in France, he lost much territory which he inherited. Of all the time—a great and invaluable lifetime—spent, of all the human lives destroyed, of all the taxes wrung from his people, there remained no fruits but the small district of Calais, destined to furnish fresh cause of feud, and a heritage of eternal hate on the part of France towards England. But, so far as Edward III.'s foreign expeditions led his great and factious nobles abroad, they ensured a long and settled quiet at home. That quiet, it is true, was not free from oppressions and from plunderings of the people by the practice of purveyance. Edward ruled with a high hand, and kept both his nobles and people in subjection; but the exactions of the Crown were, at their worst, far more tolerable than those of a crowd of barons and their vassals, and the horrors which civil dissensions inflicted on the people. With all the drain of men and *barones minores*, or lesser nobility, to the wars, there were constant complaints of robberies, murders, and other outrages committed under protection of the great; but in no degree so extensive as at the times when the restless and quarrelsome nobles were all at home. The king, too, driven to straits by the constant want of money for his wars, always made very free in levying taxes without consent of Parliament, and in procuring provisions by what was styled purveyance. When the king had no money his family must subsist, and therefore he was obliged to send out his servants as purveyors, who seized provisions wherever they could find them, and gave tallies, or wooden memoranda, of what they took, at what rate they pleased; the price to be obtained as best it might, or stopped out of the next taxes.

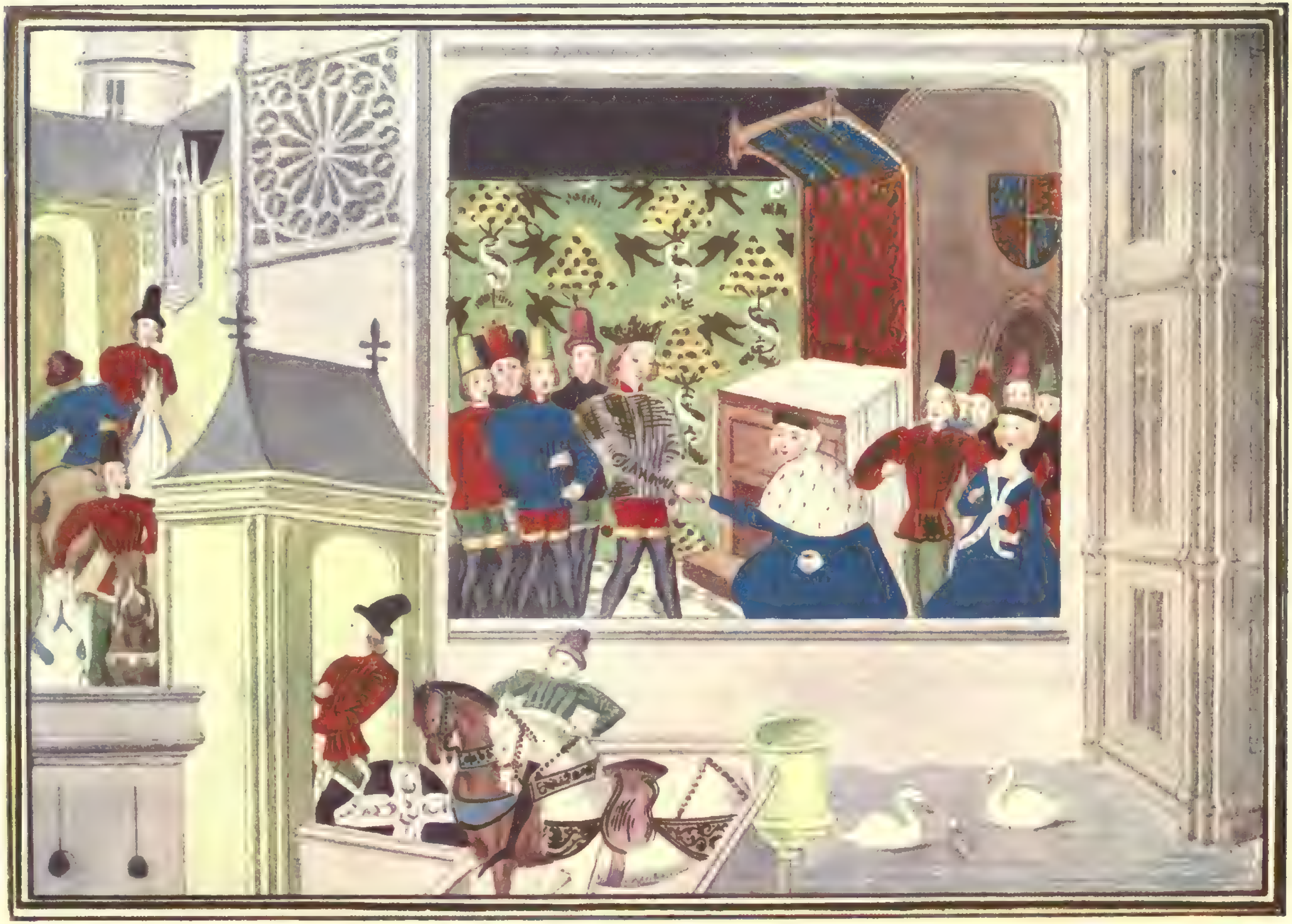
But for all these things the king was called to account on each fresh application to Parliament for supplies. By this means the Parliament during his reign acquired a great amount of influence, as it had done under Edward I. from the same cause, and began to feel its power; so that, as we have seen, the king was obliged to renew the Great Charter fifteen times during his reign. So also we see, in the last years of his reign, the Parliament impeached his ministers, and drove Lord Neville and Lord Latimer from his service. The power of the barons was thus considerably depressed; and, at the same time, that of the Crown was restrained, and by nothing more than by a statute passed in the twenty-fifth year of Edward's reign, limiting the charge of high treason—before very loose and expandable, at the royal pleasure—to four principal heads: namely, conspiring the death of the king, queen, or his eldest son; levying war against him in his kingdom, or adhering to his enemies; counterfeiting the Great Seal, or bringing false money into the land; slaying the royal officers while in discharge of their duty; and even on these grounds no penalty was to be inflicted without the sanction of Parliament.

Trade in this reign was at a low ebb, the natural result of war: yet Edward made efforts to introduce woollen manufactures, having observed their value amongst the Flemings, at the same time that he injured commerce by seizing so many of its ships to convey his troops and stores. Altogether, it was a reign, during which, owing to the necessities of the king and the nobles, the people were slowly advancing, and in which they were considerably relieved from the encroachments and exactions of the Church by the firm conduct of the king. He passed a statute of provisors, making it penal for bishops or clergy to receive bulls from Rome, and menacing with outlawry any who appealed to Rome against judgments passed in England. Parliament, encouraged by this, went further, declaring that the Pope levied five times more taxes in England than the king; adding that they would no longer endure it, and even plainly talking of throwing off all papal authority. In fact, in this reign really began the Reformation. Altogether, therefore, the reign of Edward III. is as remarkable for the growth of popular power as for that of military fame.

ALICE PERRERS AT THE DEATHBED OF EDWARD III. (*See p.* 447.)

Edward had a large family by his queen Philippa—namely, five sons and four daughters, who grew up. Besides the Black Prince and John of Gaunt, so well known to history, there was Lionel, Duke of Clarence, the third son, who left one daughter, married to Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, the son of the notorious Mortimer of the last reign. He married, as second wife, a daughter of the Duke of Milan, and died in Italy. He is said to have greatly resembled his father and the Black Prince in his character. The fifth son was Edmund, Earl of Cambridge, afterwards created Duke of York by Richard II.; and the sixth was Thomas, Earl of Buckingham, also created by Richard II. Duke of Gloucester. In this reign the title of Duke was first adopted from France, and that of Marquis was introduced into England about the same time.

The daughters of Edward were Isabella, Joan, Mary, and Margaret; of whom Joan died unmarried, though affianced to Pedro the Cruel; Mary was married to John de Montfort, Duke of Brittany; and Margaret to John Hastings, Earl of Pembroke, so conspicuous in the wars of France.



From the Froissart MS. in the British Museum

INTERVIEW OF RICHARD II. WITH HIS UNCLE THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, AT THE CASTLE OF PLESHY, ESSEX.

THIS PICTURE FORMS ONE OF THE CURIOUS AND BEAUTIFULLY COLOURED ILLUMINATIONS THAT EMBELLISH THE FROISSART MS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM. A PORTION OF THE WALL, IT WILL BE OBSERVED, IS CUT OUT, SO AS TO PRESENT, BESIDES A VIEW OF THE CASTLE YARD WHERE GROOMS AND ATTENDANTS ARE WAITING, AN INTERIOR VIEW OF THE MEETING BETWEEN THE KING AND HIS UNCLE. THE KING'S UNEXPECTED VISIT IS DESCRIBED ON P. 472 OF THE PRESENT VOLUME.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE REIGN OF RICHARD II.

Accession of the King—Attitude of John of Gaunt—Patriotic Government—Insurrection of the Peasantry—John Ball—The Poll-tax—Wat Tyler—The Attack on London—The Meeting at Mile End—Death of Wat Tyler, and Dispersion of the Insurgents—Marriage of the King—Expedition of the Bishop of Norwich—Death of Wycliffe—Unpopularity of Lancaster—He Retires to Spain—Gloucester Attacks the Royal Favourites—Committee of Reform—The Lords Appellant—The Wonderful Parliament—Richard sets Himself Free—His Good Government—Expedition to Ireland—Marriage with Isabella of France—The King's Vengeance—Banishment of Hereford and Norfolk—Arbitrary Rule of the King—His Second Visit to Ireland—Return of Hereford—Deposition and Murder of Richard.

RICHARD II. was only eleven years of age at the time of his grandfather's death. He was the sole surviving son of the popular Black Prince, his elder brother having died before his father left Guienne. Richard, therefore — called Richard of Bordeaux, from being born there—was brought up as the heir-apparent by his mother, Joan of Kent, and his uncles, in the most luxurious indulgence, and in the most extravagant ideas of his royal rank. This was a fatal commencement for the reign of a boy, and it was made still more so by the extreme popularity of his father, whose memory was idolised both as the most renowned warrior of his time, and as the advocate of the people against the stern measures of Edward III. All these things combined to spoil a naturally good and affectionate disposition.

Richard ascended the throne on the 22nd of June, 1377, his grandfather having died the day before. While the old king still lay on his death-bed, a deputation of the citizens of London had waited on the juvenile prince at Shene, where he was living, and offered him their lives and fortunes. They entreated him to come and take up his residence in the Tower amongst them. Richard gave a gracious reply in assent, and the next afternoon made his entrance into the capital. Three weeks were spent in performing the obsequies of the late king, and in preparing for the coronation of the present. This took place on the 16th of July.

The day after the coronation the prelates and barons met in council to arrange the form of government during the king's minority. They avoided appointing a regent in order, as is supposed, that they might not have to elect the Duke of Lancaster, the celebrated John of Gaunt, the king's uncle, who had long been suspected of aspiring to the crown, and who was, moreover, an unpopular personage. They therefore chose nine councillors—namely, three bishops, two earls, two barons, and two knights—to assist the chancellor and the treasurer. Not one of the king's uncles was included, not even the Earl of Cambridge, afterwards made Duke of York, who was indolent and of slight capacity, and therefore not much to be feared; nor the Earl of Buckingham, afterwards Duke of Gloucester, who was bold and turbulent, but much more popular than either of his brothers. Contrary to general expectation, Lancaster appeared to acquiesce in the arrangement without a murmur, and retired with all his attendants to his castle of Kenilworth, as if about to devote himself to the pursuits of private life. But he had taken care to secure the appointment of some of his staunch cavaliers in the council, and, in reality, he and his brothers were the ruling powers in the state. Amongst the leading members of the council were the Bishops of London, Carlisle, and Salisbury, the Earls of March and Stafford, Sir Richard Devereux, and Sir Hugh Segrave.

The Commons had acquired now so much consideration and boldness, that they petitioned the king on this occasion to be admitted to assist the barons in nominating the royal council during the minority; which petition, though it was not complied with, received a civil answer. They further represented the necessity of their being summoned every year, as entitled by the law of Edward III., and before they dissolved they appointed two citizens as treasurers to receive and disburse the moneys granted by them to the Crown. These treasurers were John Philpot and William Walworth, citizens of London.

The Commons did not conceal their suspicions of the Duke of Lancaster. They uttered very plain language regarding him, and this language did not fail to rouse his ire. When the Archbishop of Canterbury recommended Richard to the affections of his people, and called on Parliament to assist in advising how the enemies of the realm might best be opposed, the Commons replied that they could not themselves venture to answer so important a question, but begged to have the aid of twelve peers, naming the Duke of Lancaster expressly as "my lord of Spain."

The moment that the king had assented to this the Duke arose, bent his knee to the king, and said, with much anger, that the Commons had no claim to advice from him. They had charged him with nothing short of treason—him, the son of a king, and one of the first lords of the realm, a man of a family not only closely allied to the throne, but noted for its faith and loyalty. It would, indeed, be marvellous, he said, if he, with more than any other subject in the kingdom to lose, should be found a traitor. He resented the imputation indignantly, called on his accusers to stand forth, and declared that he would meet them like the poorest knight, either in single combat, or in any other way that the king might appoint.

This extraordinary demonstration created a great sensation. The lords and prelates crowded round him, entreating him to be pacified, "for no mortal being could give credit to such imputations." The Commons pointed to the fact that they had named Lancaster as their principal adviser, and finally the duke allowed himself to be appeased. But it was clear that the Commons were strongly against him. The majority consisted of the very men who had been opposed to him in 1376; and their speaker was Sir Peter De la Mare, the man whom he had imprisoned for his activity on that occasion.

Another blow aimed at the aspiring duke was through his patronage of the late king's mistress, the notorious Alice Perrers. Lancaster had procured her return from banishment, and protected her. But he was now fain to abandon her, seeing the stormy state of the political atmosphere, and consented even to sit on a committee of the House, with four other peers, to try her for soliciting causes in the king's courts for hire and reward, and for having procured from the late king the revocation of the appointment of Sir Nicholas Dagworth to an office in Ireland, and a full pardon of Richard Lyons, who had been convicted by the Commons of various misdemeanours. The beautiful, clever, and unscrupulous Alice was now finally banished, with forfeiture of all her lands, tenements, goods, and chattels.

The enemies more immediately in view when the Parliament was summoned were the French and Spaniards. Taking advantage of the reign of a minor, the French refused to renew the truce which had expired before the death of the late king; they drew close their alliance with Enrique de Trastamare, who resented the assumption of the title of King of Castile by the Duke of Lancaster. They united their fleets and ravaged the English coasts. Richard only ascended the throne in June, and in August the whole of the Isle of Wight was in the possession of these foreigners, with the exception of Carisbrooke Castle. They laid waste the island, burnt the towns of Hastings and Rye, and attacked Southampton and Winchelsea. Winchelsea made a successful resistance, and the Earl of Arundel, falling on the combined fleet before Southampton, repulsed it with great loss. But marauders of other nations flocked to the fleets of the French and Spaniards, and committed much devastation both on our ships at sea and on our coasts. The maritime districts of Kent and Sussex suffered severely, and a fleet even ascended the Thames and burnt the greater part of Gravesend.

To check these several inroads Parliament granted supplies which, however, from the empty condition of the Treasury, were obliged to be borrowed in advance from the merchants. With these funds a fleet was raised, and put under the command of the Duke of Lancaster, who passed over to Brittany, besieged the town of St. Malo, where he lay for some weeks, and then returned to England without effecting anything, to the grievous disappointment of the people. Meantime the Scots, instigated by the French, broke the truce, and attacked the castle of Berwick, which they took. They burned Roxburgh, and made incursions into the northern counties. Being repulsed, and Berwick having been retaken by the Earl of Northumberland, they united with the French and Spaniards at sea, and under one John Mercer, they swept the German Ocean, and seized all the ships in the port of Scarborough.

These tidings produced great alarm and indignation in London, and John Philpot, the stout alderman lately appointed one of the treasurers for the Commons, seeing that nothing was done by the Government effectually to check these marauders, fitted out a small fleet at his own expense, put to sea without waiting for any commission from the authorities, and, coming up with the united fleet, gave battle, and after a desperate conflict succeeded in capturing sixteen Spanish ships, with all the vessels carried off from Scarborough, and John Mercer himself. Returning triumphantly to London after this most brilliant achievement, he was received, as he deserved, with enthusiastic acclamation by his fellow-citizens, but was severely reprimanded by the royal council for having dared to make war without regal permission. So offensive was it to the routine of that day that a man without orders should save his country.

Nothing having been done by the regularly appointed commanders except the usual feat of spending the money, a new Parliament was summoned. This met at Gloucester on the 20th of October, 1378. The Commons objected to a fresh subsidy, as well they might, seeing that the last had produced no advantage; but, being answered by Sir Richard Scrope, the steward of the household, that it was indispensable, they insisted on permission to examine the accounts of the treasurers, which was granted under protest that it was not by right, but by favour, and should not be drawn into a precedent. They next requested to be furnished with a copy of the enrolment of the tenths and fifteenths which they had last granted, to learn how they had been raised, which, as money was wanted, was also conceded under protest. Finally, they proposed that six peers and prelates should come to their chamber to consult with them on these matters—an evidence that the Lords and Commons at that time regularly occupied separate houses. This was declined by the great men of the Upper House, who, however, professed their readiness to meet, by committee, with a committee of the Commons.

The Commons having obtained the necessary accounts and documents, went leisurely and deliberately to work; and though the impatient Government repeatedly urged them to dispatch, they still proceeded with all sedateness and care, showing that the popular body was growing sensible of its real powers. Having discovered that the whole of the supplies had been duly but fruitlessly spent, they granted a fresh impost on wool, wool-fells, and skins, for the pressing services of the State.

Another army was raised, and placed under the command of the Earl of Buckingham. He passed over to Calais, whence in the summer of 1380 he marched with 2,000 cavalry and 8,000 infantry, through the very heart of France, pursuing the old accustomed ravages, through Picardy, Campagne, Orleannais, and on to Brittany. The Duke of Burgundy, with a far greater army, hovered in the vicinity of this handful of men; but, remembering the past result of conflict with small armies of the English, he kept aloof.

By the time that Buckingham reached Brittany, Charles V. died, and Charles VI., a minor, like the King of England, succeeded in the autumn of that year. The Bretons, now thinking that, a mere boy being on the throne of France, they could protect themselves, grew impatient of the burdensome presence of the English. De Montfort, who had found a friendly refuge in England, was averse from treating his old allies with ingratitude; but the people accused the English of rapacity and haughtiness—and, no doubt, with cause enough, if we are to judge by the general proceedings of the English in France—and would not cease their demands till the count had transferred his alliance to the regency which governed France during the minority. This accomplished, the people expressed every impatience to be rid of Buckingham and his army, and as soon as the following spring allowed of his embarking, he took his leave, having escaped the hostility of the natives only by the bravery of his troops and the supplies of provisions from home. The English returned home denouncing bitterly the ingratitude of the Bretons; and this was the unsatisfactory termination of their long and expensive exertions to maintain the independence of Brittany. The only possession which we retained in that province was the port of Brest, which Richard had received from De Montfort in exchange for an equivalent estate in England. Calais and Cherbourg—obtained from the King of Navarre—Bordeaux and Bayonne were still towns in the hands of the English, affording tempting avenues of approach to every quarter of France, and incitements to future expeditions.

But at this moment events were approaching which demanded all the efforts of the Government to maintain domestic order. In various countries of Europe the advance of society, and, though slow, of trade and manufactures, had begun to produce its certain effect upon the people. They no sooner ate of the tree of knowledge than they perceived that they were naked—naked of liberty, and property, and every solid comfort. They were in a great measure serfs and bondsmen, transmitted with the estates from proprietor to proprietor, like the chattels and the live stock. The haughty aristocracy looked upon them as little better than the beasts; and, addicted to continual wars with each other or with foreign countries, made use of the miserable people only as soldiers for those wars or as slaves to cultivate their lands. The wretched sufferers were ground by domestic exactions, and pillaged and burnt out continually in some of the countries by invading armies. Nothing could be more terrible than their condition; and when they began to perceive all its horrors, and to endeavour to rise above them, their imperious masters trod them down again with harsh and often terrible ferocity.

But wherever towns grew and trade sprang up, there numbers became, by one means or other, free. In England every man who could contrive to live a year and a day in any town became a free man. The very wars which had desolated Europe had tended to awaken a spirit of independence; the soldiers who served in different countries picked up intelligence by comparing various conditions of men. The constant demands of Government for money inspired those who had to furnish it with a sense of their own importance. The example of the freedom and superior comfort in towns stimulated the inhabitants of the country to grasp at equal benefits.

Flanders, as the earliest manufacturing and trading country, had, as we have seen, speedily become democratic; had expelled its ruler, and had now maintained a long career of independence. At this moment it was waging a most sanguinary and determined war, not only against its own earl, but against the whole forces of Burgundy and France, led by Philip van Artevelde—the son of Jacob, the stout old brewer of Ghent—and by a relentless citizen, Peter Dubois.

Once more in France insurrection had broken out, headed by the burghers and people of the towns, excited against the tax-gatherers, and had spread from Rouen to Paris, where it was raging. And now the same convulsion, originating in the same causes, had reached England; and simultaneously in Flanders, France, and this country, the people were in arms against their Government and nobles.

It has been supposed that the preaching of Wycliffe had no little effect in rousing this storm in England, and there can be no doubt of it. The people, once made acquainted with the doctrines of human right, justice, and liberty abounding in the Bible, and pervading it as its very essence, could only regard the knowledge as a direct call from God to rise, rend the bondage of their cruel slavery, and assume the rank of men. This light, this wonderful knowledge, coming too suddenly upon them, made them, as it were, intoxicated, and overthrew all restraint and tranquillity of mind. They felt their wrongs the more acutely by perceiving their rights, and how basely they had been deprived of them by men professing this religion of truth, justice and humanity. Such was the case on the preaching of Luther in Germany afterwards, and it was the case here now. Occasionally a nobleman had suddenly emancipated the whole of the villeins on his domain in return for a fixed rent to be paid by them; but this process was slow and uncertain, and extremely exciting to those who witnessed this emancipation, remaining themselves in bondage. Thus all classes of the people were in a restless state. The freemen just above these serfs, and especially those on the coast, who had been plundered and burnt out by the enemy, were full of bitterness from their sufferings, and disposed to regard the tax-gatherer as little short of a demon. Few, except the working order of the clergy, who lived and laboured amongst them, treated them like human beings.

Imagine, then, this state of things, and a priest like John Ball of Kent coming amongst them on Sundays as they issued out of church in the villages, and saying to them as Froissart thus reports him: "Ah, ye good people, matters go not well to pass in England, nor shall do, till everything be common, and that there be no villeins nor gentlemen, but that we be all united together, and that the lords be no greater masters than we. What have we deserved, or why should we be kept thus in bondage? We all come from one father and mother, Adam and Eve. Whereby can they show that they are greater lords than we be? saving by that they cause us to win and labour for that they dispend. They are clothed in velvet and camlet, furred with ermine, and we are vestured with poor cloth. They have their wines, spices, and good bread, and we have the drawing out of the chaff, and drink water. They dwell in fair houses, and we have the pain and travel, rain, and wind in the fields; and by that which cometh of our labours they keep and maintain their estates. We be called their bondmen, and without we do willingly their service we be beaten; and we have no sovereign to whom we can complain, nor that will hear us, nor do us right. Let us go to the king—he is young—and show him what bondage we be in, and show him how we will have it otherwise, or else we will provide us of some remedy; and if we go together, all manner of people who be now in any bondage will follow us, to the intent to be made free; and when the king seeth us we shall have some remedy, either by fairness or otherwise."

This honest John Ball, having got this great gospel of freedom into his head, could not be prevailed on to be quiet. The archbishop shut him up for some months in prison, but on coming out he went about saying the very same things. "And these people," says Froissart, "of whom there be more in England than in any other realm, loved John Ball, and said that he said truth." In the beginning of the world, they said, there were no bondmen; wherefore they maintained none ought to be bound, without he did treason to his lord as Lucifer did to God. But they said they could have no such battle, because they were "neither angels nor spirits," but men formed in the similitudes of their lords; adding, "Why, then, should we be kept under so like beasts?" And they declared they would no longer suffer it; they would be all one, and if they laboured for their lords, they would have wages for it.

This was all only too true; but a truth coming too suddenly, and more than they could bear, or were disciplined to win, or, if won all at once, to maintain. And these poor people did not know that even now there was growing up that power amongst the people, in the shape of Parliament, which should gradually and securely fight their battles, and establish all their desires. Even now the Commons had reached the presence of the king and the nobles, and stood there boldly declaring their rights, and putting an ever-growing restraint on regal and aristocratic licence.

JOHN WYCLIFFE.

(From the portrait in King's College, Cambridge.)

In the Parliament which met in January, 1380, the Commons complained loudly of the extravagance of the expenditure. They demanded that the king's council should be dismissed; that the king should govern only by the aid of the usual Crown officers—the chancellor, treasurer, privy seal, chamberlain, and steward of the household; and that these ministers should be chosen by Parliament. These unexampled demands were all granted; a committee of finance was appointed, to consist of Lords and Commons; and such a concession as had never yet been made was granted, and three representatives of cities—two aldermen of London, and one of York—were put upon it. In the autumn, being informed that the subsidies which they voted were inadequate to defray the debts of the State, they pronounced the demand for more money "outrageous and insupportable." This was bold language; the result was, of the many schemes to meet the difficulty, the fatal poll-tax, which threw the country into a general convulsion. This was a tax of three groats per head on every male and female above fifteen years of age. In towns it was to be regulated by the rank and ability of the inhabitants, in order to render it easier to the poor, so that no person should pay less than one groat, nor more than sixty, for himself and wife.

This poll-tax was the drop to the full cup. The people were already groaning under the continued exactions for the French wars, and this tax drove them to desperation. What added gall to its bitterness was that it was farmed out to some of the courtiers, who again farmed it out to foreign merchants, whose collectors proceeded with a degree of harshness and insolence which irritated the people beyond endurance. It was soon discovered that the amounts which came into the treasury would by no means reach the sum calculated upon. Commissions were then issued to inquire into the conduct of the collectors, and to enforce payment in cases where favour had been shown, or where due payment had not been made.

The people soon grew obstinate, and declared boldly they would not pay. Hereupon the commissioners treated them very severely, and they again, on their part, resenting this severity, began secretly to combine for resistance, and proceeded to chase away, wound, or even kill the officers of the law.

One of these commissioners, Thomas de Bampton, sat at Brentwood in Essex, and summoned the people of Fobbing before him. They declared that they would not pay a penny more than they had done. Bampton then menaced them, and ordered his sergeant-at-arms to arrest them. But they drove him and his men away. Whereupon Sir Robert Belknap, the chief justice of the Common Pleas, was sent into Essex to try the recusants; but they denounced him as a traitor to king and country, made him glad to get away, and cut off the heads of the jurors and clerks of the commission, which they stuck upon poles, and carried through all the neighbouring towns and villages, calling on the people to rise. In a few days the commons of Essex were in a general insurrection, and had found a leader in a vagabond priest, who called himself Jack Straw.

They attacked the house of Sir Robert Hales, the Lord Treasurer of England, who was also Prior of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. Ample provision had just been made for a chapter-general of the order, and there was in the house abundance of meats, wines, cloths, and other things for the knights brethren. The people ate up the provisions, drank the wine, and destroyed the house.

They then sent letters and messengers into all the neighbouring counties, and not only the peasantry of Kent, but of Norfolk and Suffolk, were soon up in arms. But the incident which caused the whole immediately to break into flame was this:—One of the collectors of the tax at Dartford, in Kent, went to the house of one Wat Tyler, or Walter the Tyler, who, Froissart says, was "indeed a tyler of houses, an ungracious patron." He demanded the tax for a daughter of Wat, who the mother contended was under fifteen, the age fixed by the law. The insolent tax-gatherer declared he would prove that, and was proceeding to the grossest outrage, when Wat came running in at the outcries of the wife and daughter, and knocked out the scoundrel's brains with his hammer. The neighbours applauded Wat's spirit, and vowed to stand by him; "for," says the chronicler, "the rude officers had in many places made the like trial."

The news of this exciting occurrence, and the insurrection of the men of Kent, spread rapidly over the whole country, from the Thames to the Humber; through Hertford, Surrey, Sussex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridge, and Lincoln. In every place they chose some leader, whose assumed names still remain in their letters and proclamations, as Jakke Milner, Jak Carter, and Jak Treweman. They were invited by the letters from Kent to march to London, where "the Commons should be of one mind, and should do so much to the king that there should not be one bondman in all England." They are reported soon to have mustered 60,000 from the counties round London, making free with houses and provisions as they marched along.

But the great stream appears to have come from Kent and the south. One of their first visits was to Sir Simon Burley, the guardian of the king, at Gravesend. Sir Simon had claimed a man living in that town as his bondman, in spite of the legal plea set up that he had resided there more than a year and a day. He demanded 300 pounds of silver for the man's freedom; but this was refused, and Sir Simon sent his prisoner to Rochester Castle. The men of Kent, now joined by a strong body from Essex, marched on Rochester, took the castle by surprise, and not only liberated this man, but other prisoners.

At Maidstone Wat Tyler was elected captain of the insurgent host, and the democratic preacher, John Ball, its chaplain, who took for the text of his first sermon the good old rhyme—

"When Adam dolve, and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?"

Wat Tyler and his host entered Canterbury on the Monday after Trinity Sunday, 1381, where John Ball denounced death to the archbishop, who had often imprisoned him: luckily, however, he was absent. But they broke open the archbishop's house; and, as they carried out the wealthy pillage, they said, "Ah! this Chancellor of England hath had a good market to get together all this riches. He shall now give an account of the revenues of England, and the great profits he hath gathered since the king's coronation."

They struck terror into the monks and clergy of the cathedral; did much damage to it and the church of St. Vincent, as is said; compelled the mayor and aldermen to swear fidelity to King Richard and the Commons of England; cut off the heads of three wealthy men of the city; and, followed by 500 of the poor inhabitants, advanced towards London. By the time they reached Blackheath, joined by the streaming thousands from all quarters, the insurgents are said to have numbered 100,000 men.

Into the midst of this strange, rude, and tumultuous host, suddenly, to her astonishment and terror, came the king's mother, on her return from a pilgrimage to Canterbury. "She was," says Froissart, "in great jeopardy to have been lost, for the people came to her chaise and did rudely use her, whereof the good lady was in great dread lest they should have dealt rudely with her damsels. Howbeit, God kept her," and being excused with a few kisses, and with offers of protection, she got to London as fast as she could, and to her son in the Tower, with whom there were the Earl of Salisbury, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Earl of Hereford, and other noblemen and gentlemen.

At Blackheath John Ball frequently addressed the assembled multitudes on his old and favourite topics of the rights and equality of men. We must bear in mind that this man and his doctrines have been described by his enemies. He appears to have been a thorough democrat or Chartist of his day, drawing his opinions from the literal declarations of the gospel that God is no respecter of persons; and these new and startling ideas being addressed to the inflamed minds of ignorant and oppressed people, they immediately applied them in their own way, and declared that they would have no more lords, barons, and archbishops, but simply the king and the Commons of England. They are said to have committed great atrocities on their way from different counties, pillaging the manors of their lords, demolishing the towns, and burning the court rolls. They swore to be true to the king, and to have no king of the name of John, this being aimed at John of Gaunt, their standing aversion, who was regarded as the author of this tax, because he exercised authority over his nephew. They also swore to oppose all taxes but fifteenths, the ancient tallage paid by their fathers.

That many outrages were committed is most probable: such must be inevitable from so general a rising of an uneducated and oppressed populace smarting under generations of wrongs. But we shall most fairly judge them by their own public demands presented to the king, which we shall presently see were most wonderfully simple, reasonable, and enlightened for such a people, under such exasperating circumstances.

The harangues of John Ball are described as working the insurgent army into the wildest excitement, and the admiring people are said to have declared that he should be the Primate and Chancellor of England, this officer at that time being almost always a prelate.

At the taking of the castle of Rochester, the mob had compelled the governor, Sir John Newton, to go along with them; and now they sent him up the river in a boat to go to the king at the Tower as their messenger. He was to inform the king of all that they had done or meant to do for his honour; to say that his kingdom had for a long time been ill-governed by his uncles and the clergy, especially by the Archbishop of Canterbury, his chancellor, from whom they would have an account of his administration of the revenue. Sir John, coming to the Tower, was received by Richard graciously; and he then told the people's desire, assuring the king that all he said was true, and that he dared do no other than bring the message, for they had his children as hostages, and would kill them if he did not return.

After some consultation the king informed Sir John that in the morning he would come and speak to the people. With this message Sir John joyfully departed, and the vast crowd are said to have received the message of the king's coming with great satisfaction.

GREAT SEAL OF RICHARD II.

The next morning, being the 12th of June, the king, attended by a considerable number of the lords of the court, descended the river in his barge. At Rotherhithe he found 10,000 men on the river banks awaiting his coming, with two banners of St. George and sixty pennons. So soon as they saw the king they set up one universal cheer. This was no doubt meant as a hearty welcome; but the king and his courtiers being all in a state of panic—for the council, it is stated, were perfectly paralysed by their fears—the boisterous acclamation struck the royal party as frightful yells. "The people," says Froissart, "made such a shout and cry as if all the devils in hell had been among them." Instead of landing, the courtiers advised the king to draw off. The people cried to the king that, if he would come on shore, they would show him what they wanted; but the Earl of Salisbury replied, saying, "Sirs, ye be not in such order or array that the king ought to speak to you;" and with that the royal barge bore away up the river again.

At this sight the crowd were filled with indignation. They had hoped that now they should bring to the royal ear all their grievances; and there can be little doubt that if the king had shown the spirit which he afterwards did, and boldly and courteously put his barge within good hearing, and listened to and answered their complaints, all that followed might have been prevented. But being now persuaded that the great lords about him would not allow the king to hold fair and open audience with them, "they returned," says Froissart, "to the hill where the main body lay"—for this was only a deputation, the hill being most likely Greenwich Park—and there informed the multitude what had taken place.

On hearing this the enraged host cried out with one voice, "Let us go to London!" "And so," continues Froissart, "they took their way thither; and on their going they beat down abbeys and houses of advocates and men of the court, and so came into the suburbs of London, which were great and fair, and beat down divers fair houses, and especially the king's prisons, as the Marshalsea and others, and delivered out the prisoners that were therein." They broke into the palace of the archbishop at Lambeth, regarding him as the enemy of the nation, and burnt the furniture and the records belonging to the chancery.

As the men of Kent advanced through Southwark, the men of Essex advanced along the left bank of the river, destroyed the house of the lord treasurer at Highbury, and menaced the north of London.

When the men of Kent arrived at London Bridge they found it closed against them, and they declared that if they were not admitted they would burn all the suburbs, and, taking London by force, would put every one to death. The people within said, "Why do we not let these good people in? What they do they do for us all!" and thereupon they let down the centre of the bridge, which Walworth, the mayor, had had drawn up.

"Then these people entered into the city, and went into houses, and sat down to eat and drink. They desired nothing but it was incontinently brought to them, for every man was ready to make them good cheer, and to give them meat and drink to please them. Then the captains, as John Ball, Jack Straw, and Wat Tyler, went throughout London, and 20,000 men with them, and so came to the Savoy, in the way to Westminster, which was a goodly house, which appertained to the Duke of Lancaster; and when they entered they slew the keepers thereof, and robbed and pillaged the house, and then set fire to it, and clean burnt and destroyed it."

This palace of John of Gaunt's was the most magnificent house in London. The mob, having thus shown their hatred of him, went to the house of the Knights Hospitallers in Clerkenwell, which had been lately built by Sir Robert Hales, the grand prior of the Order and Treasurer of the kingdom, whose house they destroyed at Highbury. It is only fair to bear in mind that in destroying these noble houses, the people disclaimed any idea of plunder. Their objects were, as they asserted, to punish the traitors to the nation, and obtain their own freedom from bondage. They published a proclamation forbidding any one to secrete any booty. They hammered out

ONE OF WYCLIFFE'S "POOR PRIESTS" PREACHING TO THE PEOPLE. (*See p.* 462.)

the plate, and cut it into small pieces. They beat the precious stones to powder, and one of the rioters having concealed in his bosom a silver cup, was thrown with his prize into the river.

In the morning (June 14), the sight from the Tower was by no means cheering. The multitude was clamouring for the heads of the chancellor and treasurer, whom they regarded as main authors of all the exactions and ill-treatment they had received, and preventing the entrance of any provisions till their demand was conceded. Presently a message was brought them from the king that if they would quietly retire to Mile End, then having plenty of open land, "where the people of the city did disport themselves in the summer season," he would meet them there and listen to their requests. Anon the gates were thrown open, the drawbridge was lowered, and Richard, attended by a few unarmed followers, rode on amid the throng. Arriving at Mile End, he found himself surrounded by 60,000 petitioners. On the way Richard's half brothers, the Earl of Kent and Sir John Holland, had taken alarm and ridden off, leaving this youth of sixteen in a cowardly manner in such circumstances. But Richard on this occasion displayed a bravery and a discretion which, had they been uniformly exhibited, must have produced a prosperous reign.

According to Froissart, in the night, while they lay asleep on Tower Hill, the king had been advised by Sir William Walworth and others to make a sally and slay them in their sleep; for, as he observes, there were not one in twenty in harness, and as they were drunken, they might be killed like so many flies. These counsellors represented that the citizens of London could easily do this, as they had their friends ready in arms secreted in their houses, and that there were Sir Robert Knowles and Sir Perdiccas d'Albret, the famous Free Company captains, with 8,000 more that might be mentioned. But the Earl of Salisbury and "the wise men about the king gave better and more humane advice." And now that the king spoke face to face with them, behold, all their demands resolved them into these four:—1, The abolition of bondage; 2, The reduction of the rent of land to fourpence the acre; 3, The liberty of buying and selling in all fairs and markets; 4, A general pardon for the past offences.

The king with a smiling countenance assured them that all this was fully granted them, and that if they would retire every one to his own county and place, he would give one of his banners to those of each shire, bailiwick, and parish to march home under; and that they should leave two or three from each village to bring unto them copies of the charter he would give them. On hearing this the people said, "We desire no more." They became quite appeased, and began to draw off towards London. That night thirty clerks were employed in making copies of this charter, which were sealed and delivered in the morning.

But while the superior and better-disposed country people had attended the king, Wat Tyler and Jack Straw, with the more turbulent and factious portion of the insurgents, had remained behind. No sooner was the king out of sight, than these treacherous fellows made a rush at the Tower, and got possession of it, most probably through the perfidy or perhaps panic of the garrison, for there were in the Tower, according to Holinshed, 600 men-at-arms, and as many archers, while of these commons and husbandmen many were provided only with sticks, and not one in a thousand was properly armed. Here the insurgents got possession, as no doubt was their grand object, of their designed victims, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the chancellor; Sir Robert Hales, the treasurer; William Appledore, the king's confessor; and Legge, one of the farmers of the obnoxious tax, with three of his accomplices. All these they speedily beheaded. The head of the archbishop was carried through the city on the point of a lance, with the hat he wore nailed to the skull, that he might be better known to the multitude, and it was set on London Bridge.

They ranged through all the apartments of the Tower, again came upon the terrified mother of the king, pricked her bed with their swords to see if any one was concealed in it, and saluted her with a few more kisses. The poor lady fainted away, and was carried by her attendants to her house, called "The Wardrobe in Carter Lane." Here the king on his return joined her, and gave her comfort, trusting that all would now soon be over.

In the morning (June 15), Richard left the Wardrobe, and, after mass at Westminster, rode through Smithfield at the head of sixty horsemen, where he beheld a great throng of people in front of the abbey of St. Bartholomew. He said he would go no farther till he knew what ailed them, and that he would appease them again. It was Wat Tyler at the head of 20,000 insurgents. Wat had refused the charter sent to him, demanding fresh conditions; and, when these were conceded in a second, demanded still more; amongst other things, the total repeal of the forest or game laws, and that all parks, waters, warrens, and woods should be common, so that the poor as well as the rich should freely fish in all waters, hunt the deer in the parks and forests and the hare in the fields.

On seeing the king stop, Wat Tyler said, "Sirs, yonder is the king; I will go and speak with him. Stir not hence without I make you a sign; and when I make you a sign, come on and slay them all except the king. He is young; we can do with him as we please, and we will lead him with us all about England, and so we shall be lords of all the realm without doubt." Wat rode up to the king, and so near that the head of his horse touched the flanks of that of the king. Then said Wat, "Sir king, seest thou all yonder people?" "Yea, truly," said the king; "why dost thou ask?" "Because," said Wat Tyler, "they be all at my commandment, and have sworn to me faith and truth to do all that I will have them. And thinkest thou that they, and as many more in London, will depart without thy letters?"

The king courteously assured him they should have them; and at this point, says Froissart, Wat Tyler cast his eyes on an esquire of the king, whom he hated on account of some words he had said. "Ah!" said he, "art thou there? Give me thy dagger." The esquire refused, but the king bade him give it, and with that Wat began to play with it, and said to the esquire, "By my faith, I will never eat meat till I have thy head." At this moment the mayor, Sir William Walworth, coming up with his twelve horse, and hearing these words, and looking through the press, said, "Ha! thou knave, darest thou speak such words in the king's presence?" Wat gave a sharp answer, and Froissart says that the king said to Walworth, "Set hands on him." Be that as it may, Walworth thrust a short sword into Tyler's throat; or, as others say, struck him on the head with it or with his mace. At all events, Walworth gave him the first blow, which was speedily followed by one of the king's squires—Robert Standish, probably the one with whom the altercation commenced—stabbing him in the abdomen. Tyler wheeled his horse round, rode about a dozen yards, and fell to the ground, where he soon expired.

On seeing him fall his followers cried out, "We are betrayed! They have killed our captain!" and they put themselves in battle array, with their bows before them.

With wonderful presence of mind Richard ordered his attendants to keep back, and, riding confidently up to the people, said, "Sirs, what aileth you? I will be your leader and captain. Follow me, I am your king; Tyler was but a traitor; be ye at rest and peace." Then he rode back to his company, who advised that they should draw off into the fields near Islington. Thither many followed the king; and many, hoping no good, quietly stole away. On coming into the fields, they beheld Sir Robert Knowles, with 1,000 men-at-arms; and the insurgents, now fearing the worst, got away as fast as they could, throwing down their bows, and many kneeling to the king and imploring pardon. Knowles burned to be allowed to charge and cut them down; but the king refused him this indulgence, saying he would take his revenge in another way; which, in truth, he afterwards did. He issued a proclamation, however, forbidding any stranger to remain another night in the city on pain of death.

Such is the history of this remarkable insurrection as transmitted to us with some slight variations by Froissart, Knighton, Walsingham, Stowe, and Holinshed. While these things passed in London, various parts of the country were equally agitated and overrun by the insurgents. In the south the outbreak extended as far as Winchester, in the north as far as Beverley and Scarborough. The nobility shut themselves up, and neither stirred out to free themselves nor aid the king. So general and simultaneous was the rising, that some supposed that it was concerted and conducted by some able but invisible leaders much above Wat Tyler and Jack Straw in influence and subtlety. When the mob was at Blackheath there were rumours that the king's uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, was seen disguised amongst them; but this was probably owing to some one bearing a strong resemblance to the duke being there, or it may have been got up by his enemies to injure him at court, as there were active endeavours, about the same time, to alarm the king regarding Lancaster's intentions, who was on the Borders treating with the Scots.

Only one man of distinction acted with the spirit which might have been expected from the warlike baronage of England, and that was a churchman.

Henry Spencer, the young Bishop of Norwich, finding that the rebellious peasantry would not listen to what he considered reason, buckled on armour, mounted his steed and, at the head of a strong body of retainers, attacked them in the field as they were pursuing their career of depredation. He repeatedly surprised these marauding bodies, routed, and slew them. His mode of dealing with them was summary and unique. After every battle he sat in judgment on his prisoners, and, after giving them absolution from their sins, had their heads struck off. By these means he soon restored order in the counties of Norfolk, Huntingdon, and Cambridge. When the news of Tyler's overthrow and the dispersion of the insurgents spread through the country, and those who had shut themselves up in castle and town hurried forth to show their deep loyalty to the king, Spencer's work had long been done.

Richard himself, having stuck the heads of Wat Tyler and of numbers of his compeers on London Bridge, was advised to undertake a progress through the different quarters of his kingdom, to make all quiet and secure. Numbers flocked to his standard, and at the head of 40,000 men he advanced from place to place, issuing proclamations, recalling and destroying the charters he had given, commanding the villeins to return to their labours, and prohibiting, under severe penalties, any illegal assemblies. In Kent and Essex Richard found some resistance; and it was not until 500 of these unhappy creatures had been killed in Essex that they gave way. According to Holinshed, 1,500 of the insurgents were executed; amongst them Jack Straw, John Litster, and Westbroom, the last two of whom had assumed the title of Kings of Norfolk and Suffolk.

When Parliament met it was announced to it that the king had revoked all the charters he had been obliged to grant to the villeins; but the chancellor suggested whether it would not be well to abolish serfdom altogether. This, probably, was the view of the king's better counsellors: it certainly was not his view of things on his journey; but it met with the response which was inevitable at that day. The barons declared that nothing should induce them to give up the services of their villeins, and that they would resist with all their power either violence or persuasion for that object; nay, were it even to save themselves from general massacre, they must uphold the existing system. It was plain the day for the extinction of serfdom was not yet come.

The king was now sixteen, and at this early age he was married to Anne of Bohemia, who herself was only fifteen. She was the daughter of the late Emperor of Germany, Charles IV., called Charles of Luxembourg at the battle of Poitiers, where he attended his father, the old blind King of Bohemia. Anne was thus granddaughter to the brave old blind monarch, and sister to the Emperor Sigismund. As has almost universally been the case with German princesses, there was a great boast and parade of the illustrious ancestry of Anne, but no money whatever. Nay, Richard, or rather the country, had to pay the expenses of her journey to England, though it was made from the palace of one royal relative to that of another, particularly the Dukes of Brabant and Flanders, and under their escort. But, though possessed of high pedigree and without portion, Anne was reckoned handsome, and was good-hearted and pious. The king became deeply attached to her, and the English were extremely proud of her as the Cæsar's (Kaiser's, or Emperor's) sister, of which they could never speak enough. She lived only twelve years as queen; but she won the affection of every one who came near her, was universally beloved, and long lamented under the name of the "Good Queen Anne." Had she lived as long as her husband, she would undoubtedly have preserved him from alienating the love of his people, and perishing as he did.

England was at this moment about to undertake the support of the very principles of freedom and popular independence in Flanders which it had so sternly put down at home. Flanders, as the earliest manufacturing and trading country, had, as we have seen, speedily displayed a democratic spirit. It had expelled its ruler, who resisted, and endeavoured to crush all tendency towards popular rights. Though Jacob van Artevelde, the stout brewer of Ghent, had fallen, yet that high-spirited city had maintained a long career of independence. Philip van Artevelde, the son of Jacob, warned by the fate of his father, had, during his youth, kept aloof from popular ambition, and adhered to a strictly private life. But the people of Ghent becoming sorely pressed by the Earl of Flanders, and its very existence being at stake, Philip, no longer able to suppress the spirit of the patriot born with him, suddenly emerged from his obscurity and put himself at the head of the populace. He was, however, defeated and slain by the French at Rosbecque, but the Flemings recovered themselves, and made a desperate resistance. At this time there were two Popes — Clement VII., a Frenchman, and Urban VI., an Italian. We have seen that on all occasions when there was only one Pope, he was a zealous peace-maker; but this schism, with its two rival pontiffs, naturally produced a fiery feud. The French Pope, Clement, was recognised by France and its allies, Scotland, Spain, Sicily, and Cyprus. Urban was supported by England, the people of Flanders, and the rest of Europe. The two pontiffs launched their anathemas against each other, and roused all their allies to assist their respective causes. France exerting itself powerfully to give the ascendency to Clement, Urban entreated the aid of England. The prominence which the Bishop of Norwich had assumed in the Wat Tyler insurrection, and his prompt energy and success as a general, drew the attention of Urban, and he sent to the martial bishop extraordinary powers as his champion. The king and parliament gave their consent; a fifteenth lately granted by the Commons was made over to the prelate for the purposes of the enterprise, and he engaged to serve against France for a year, with 2,500 men-at-arms and the same number of archers.

COINS OF THE REIGN OF RICHARD II.

Philip Artevelde, in his great need, had solicited the assistance of England; but his ambassadors had most imprudently demanded at the same time the payment of a debt which they alleged was of forty years' standing. The Duke of Lancaster and the royal council had made themselves merry over this unique mode of soliciting alliance in a crisis, and refused to help them. But now it was determined to abet the people of Ghent, as a means of upholding them, after their heavy defeat at Rosbecque, against France.

Henry of Norwich passed over the Channel, took Gravelines by assault, pursued the fugitives to Dunkirk, and entered the town in their rear. He was speedily master of the coast as far as Sluys, and might have struck a decisive blow at the French power in Flanders; but he was not supported, though there was a numerous body of men-at-arms at Calais. The Duke of Lancaster, whose own offers of leading this expedition had been refused by Parliament, and who is said to have seen with chagrin the success of his rival, was accused of preventing the advance of these troops. The bishop, thus thwarted in the midst of his triumphs, turned his arms against Ypres, to oblige the Ghentese; but the siege was prolonged, and the King of France, at the entreaty of the Count of Flanders, was approaching with a fine army. The men of Ghent retired; the bishop made one furious assault, and then withdrew. He threw himself once more into Gravelines, and, after holding it a short time, demolished its fortifications, and returned to England.

That this campaign of the militant bishop did not equal the expectations which his former demonstration had raised, appears partly owing to his own precipitancy, but far more to the machinations of his powerful enemies. Like most unsuccessful commanders, he fell under the censure of the Government. He was accused before Parliament of having taken a bribe of 18,000 francs to betray the expedition, and of having broken his contract with the king by returning before the year of his engagement had expired. Of the former charge he was cleared on full inquiry, but he was condemned on the latter to forfeit all his temporalities till he had paid the full damages to the king. Four of his principal knights were also condemned to pay 20,000 francs into the treasury for having sold stores and provisions to the enemy to that amount

Not to interrupt the narrative of events which extend over into other years, we may here note one of the most remarkable incidents of this reign. This is the death of Wycliffe, who was struck with apoplexy while performing public service in his parish church, and died on the last day of the year 1384.

John Wycliffe had not only put in active motion the principles of Church reform by his preaching, and his public defences against the attacks of the authorities of the Church, but he had made those principles permanent by the translation of the Bible. Not that Wycliffe's was the first translation of the Scriptures into English; we know, for instance, that Bede translated the Gospel of St. John, and finished the work on his deathbed in 735. But these earlier translations of the Bible had remained in the libraries of monasteries, and, by the little education of the people, and the conservative vigilance of the Church, had been the sole study of a few learned men. Wycliffe, by his position as teacher at Oxford, had excited a wide interest and inquiry about the Scriptures; by his patronage at court, and the persecutions of the prelates, they had been made the subject of a vast curiosity, and this curiosity he had taken care to gratify by multiplying copies through the aid of transcribers, and by the "poor priests," the converts to his doctrines, reading them and recommending them everywhere amongst their hearers. The English Bible was never more to be a rare or merely curious book. It is said that when the good Queen Anne's countrymen who attended her here at the court were expelled by the Lancaster faction, they carried back copies of Wycliffe's Bible and writings, which had been her favourite reading; they thus fell into the hands of Huss and Jerome of Prague, accompanied by the anti-papal doctrines of the great English reformer; and in this manner arose in Bohemia the sect of the Hussites.

The chief value of Wycliffe's work consisted in his correction of abuses. Numbers of his "poor priests," as they were called, traversed the nation, as he had done, in their frieze gowns, and with bare feet, everywhere proclaiming the doctrines of the Gospel, and denouncing the impositions and vices of Popery. They held up the monks and priests of the time to deserved scorn, and the people, feeling the sacred truth, flocked round them, deserting those by whom they had been so long deluded and fleeced.

There can be little doubt that John Ball, the preacher of Wat Tyler's army, was one of these "poor priests" of Wycliffe, for it was only three years before Wycliffe's death that this insurrection occurred, and Wycliffe's apostles had been preaching everywhere amongst the people for years. There is as little doubt that this preaching produced this insurrection, as Luther's produced the "Peasants' War" afterwards in Germany. The effect was perfectly natural that men, who for ages had been trodden down as slaves and beasts of burden, hearing all at once that "God had made of one blood all the nations of the earth," that He "was no respecter of persons," and that they were called upon by Him to do to one another as they would be done by, should review their position, and stand astonished at its vast antithesis to the ordinances of Christianity. That the people rebelled was not their fault, but that of the barons and the Church, which, while professing the Gospel, had ignored every precept of it in regard to the people. Now that the great and eternal principles of political justice as well as saving faith contained in the Gospel were once known, they never could be again taken away; they became the heritage of the people. The Wat Tyler insurrection was put down, but that which produced it could never be put down any more. The powerful eloquence and holy lives of the preachers of Wycliffe were universally confessed. Men of all ranks, from the royal Duke of Lancaster, to the peasant, joined them, and acquired the name of Lollards. It is true that John of Gaunt supported Wycliffe from selfish motives only, and deserted him as soon as he began to attack the doctrine of Transubstantiation. The inhabitants of London were especially warm adherents of the new teaching. John of Northampton, one of the most opulent and distinguished citizens, was a decided Lollard, and during the time of his being mayor, particularly irritated the clergy, who drove a brave trade in pardons and indulgences, by his active reformation of the vices of the people. The Lords Hilton, Latimer, Percy, Berkeley, and Clifton, with many other nobles, knights, and eminent citizens, became the protectors and advocates of scriptural reform.

Richard had now reached the age of nineteen. The ability, address, and bravery which he had displayed at the time of the insurrection raised high hopes in the nation of the success of his future government. Time, however, failed to realise these expectations. Richard was by no means destitute of cleverness, but his mind was rather showy than solid. He had been brought up in his boyhood in the south of France, at the luxurious court of Bordeaux. He had early been imbued with the tastes of Provence—music and poetry—rather than with politics and arms. After his father's death his mother and half-brother had treated him with ruinous personal indulgence, and instilled into his mind the most mischievous ideas of his future greatness and royal authority. There is a striking parallel between his education, his personal character, and his fate, and those of Charles I. Both were fond of literature and the fine arts; both had the strongest domestic attachments, and had been indoctrinated with the most fatal ideas of the royal prerogative. Both were high-spirited, chivalrous, and, necessarily, despotic; they were moulded to despotism by their parents. Both had their favourites—Richard, De Vere and De la Pole; Charles, Strafford and Buckingham. Both, while they were intensely beloved by their own families and immediate associates, lost the affections of their people by utterly despising their rights, and both came to a tragic end.

When the Bishop of Norwich returned from his unfortunate expedition, Lancaster concluded an armistice with France, in which the Scots were included; but, as these reckless neighbours still continued the war, he marched into Scotland in 1384, burnt the huts of which their towns were composed, and—to destroy the retreats into which they always retired on the approach of an English army—he supplied his troops, according to Knighton, with 80,000 axes, with which they cut down the forests, inflicting a most serious injury on the nation. Notwithstanding this service, he found, on his return to London, that the suspicions of his disloyalty were more rife than ever. While the Parliament was sitting at Salisbury, a Carmelite friar, one John Latimer, put into the king's hands the written particulars of a real or pretended conspiracy to place the crown on the head of John of Gaunt. Richard was advised to show this to Lancaster, who swore that it was false, and vowed to do battle with any one who impeached his innocence. He insisted that the friar, who persisted in his story, should be committed to safe custody; and, accordingly, he was consigned to the care of Sir John Holland, the king's half brother, but a secret ally of the Duke of Lancaster, who strangled him in the night, it is said, with his own hands, and had him dragged through the streets in the morning as a traitor.

No sooner did the armistice with France and Scotland expire in May, 1385, than the French sent John of Vienne, formerly Governor of Calais, to Scotland with an aid of 1,000 men-at-arms and 400,000 francs in gold, and armour for the equipment of 1,000 Scottish knights and esquires, to induce them to make an inroad into England. This armament arrived in Scotland in the early summer, but the French knights, according to Froissart, were greatly astonished at the rudeness of the country and the hard living of the people. When they wanted to begin the campaign, they complained that the Scots wanted to be paid for fighting their own battles, and would not budge a foot till the 20,000 livres were distributed amongst them. In short, it did not tend much to the mutual satisfaction of their allies that the gay Frenchmen had come over. At length, the forces being paid, the united army of France and Scotland descended on Northumberland, and took three castles in the marches, but, on the approach of the English, as rapidly retired. John of Vienne was astonished at their retreat, allowing the enemy to pillage their country, but they told him they did not pretend to make resistance to so powerful a force; that all their cattle were driven into the woods and fastnesses; that their houses and chattels were of small value; and that they well knew how to compensate themselves. Accordingly, as Richard advanced into Scotland by Berwick and the east coast, the Scots, accompanied by the French, poured 30,000 men into England by the west, and, ravaging Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire, collected a splendid booty, and returned well satisfied to their country.

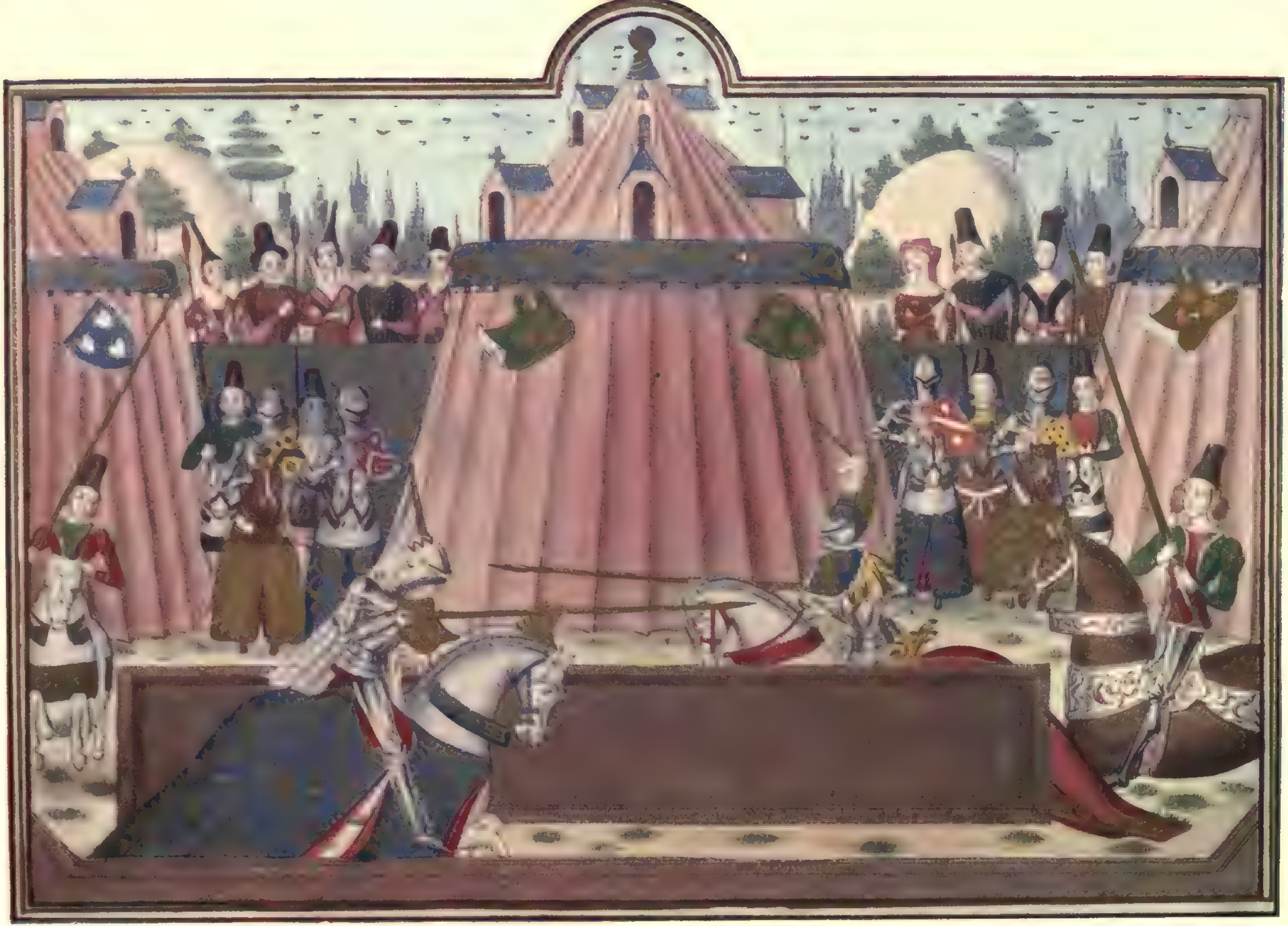
Richard was now, for the first time, at the head of an army against a foreign enemy. He had before only led his forces against his own peasantry. Marching into Scotland without being able to find any enemy, he reduced to ashes Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Perth, and Dundee, and he was about to perpetrate the same rigour on Aberdeen, when the news reached him that the Scots were laying waste Cumberland, and John of Vienne was besieging Carlisle. He then made a rapid countermarch, in order to intertercept them; but on the way another of his favourites, Sir Michael de la Pole, infused some fresh suspicions into the king's mind regarding Lancaster, and the following morning Richard angrily announced his intention of returning home. In vain Lancaster protested against it; the king persisted in his intention. He disbanded his army; and, on the other hand, the Scots declaring that they found the heavy French cavalry of no use in their desultory species of warfare, behaved with so much rudeness to them, that they also returned home, much disgusted, says Froissart, "with the country, and the manners of the inhabitants."

In the Parliament which met in November following, Richard confirmed various honours which he conferred during the expedition. He was anxious to allay the jealousies between his relatives and his favourites. He therefore created his uncles, the Earls of Cambridge and Buckingham, Dukes of York and Gloucester, with a new grant of lands of the annual value of £1,000 each. Henry Bolingbroke, the son of Lancaster, and Edward Plantagenet, the son of the Duke of York, he made Earls of Derby and Rutland. But then he proceeded to heap similar honours and emoluments on his favourites. Robert de Vere, a handsome young man of good family, but of dissolute manners, he created Earl of Oxford, with the title of Duke of Ireland—a title before unknown in England; and transferred to him by patent, which was confirmed by Parliament, the entire sovereignty of that island for life. He gave him in marriage his relative, the daughter of Ingelram de Courcy, Earl of Bedford; but De Vere became deeply enamoured of one of the queen's ladies of the bedchamber, a Bohemian, the Landgravine of Luxembourg, and therefore allied to the Imperial family. Not only the king but the queen favoured his suit, and obtained a divorce and dispensation for his fresh marriage from the Pope. This transaction gave deep offence to the English nation, for the rejected wife was the granddaughter of Edward III. and Philippa of Hainault. Her uncles, the Dukes of Gloucester, York, and Lancaster, were still more incensed.

Michael de la Pole, the other chief favourite, was created Earl of Suffolk, with the reversion of the estates of the late earl on the death of his widow and the queen. As Richard had no children, he, at the same time, in order to cut off the hopes of the Duke of Lancaster, named Roger, Earl of March, and grandson of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, his heir to the throne.

The Duke of Lancaster thus, after repeatedly avowed suspicions of his designs on the throne, now so markedly cut off, found it most agreeable to retire awhile from court; and no fairer plan could present itself than that of prosecuting his claims on the crown of Spain, in which his brother, the Earl of Cambridge, had been so unsuccessful. John, the newly-chosen King of Portugal, had sent to invite him to come over and support him against their common enemy, the King of Spain. Nothing could be more agreeable to Lancaster, and Richard was equally glad to have him out of the way. One-half of the year's supply was devoted to the purposes of this expedition. Twenty thousand men were mustered, and before John of Gaunt and Constance, his wife, Princess of Spain, set out, the king presented him with a crown of gold, as confident that he would wear it; and the queen presented one also to the duchess. The fleet sailed from Plymouth in July, 1386, and the duke arriving safely in Portugal, his eldest daughter, Philippa, was married to the king. During the first campaign the duke carried all before him; but the second summer consumed his army by its heat, and compelled him to retire to Guienne. But by successful policy he now managed to become reconciled to the King of Spain, and married his second daughter to the son and heir of that monarch. Thus John of Gaunt, though destined never to wear a crown himself, was the father of two queens. His duchess Constance made over her claims on the Spanish throne to her daughter Catherine, and their descendants reigned over Spain for many generations. For himself, he received 200,000 crowns to defray the expenses of the expedition, and an annuity was settled on him of 100,000 florins, and the same amount on the duchess.

While the Duke of Lancaster was absent, the restless Duke of Gloucester became more assuming and imperious towards the king than Lancaster had ever been. He fomented the jealousies of the nobles, insisted on remodelling the government, and reduced the king to a mere automaton. At the same time the French, also taking advantage of the great duke's absence, contemplated a formidable invasion of the island. Their preparations were on the most extensive scale, both in men and ships. The army is said to have exceeded 100,000 men; and their vessels in the port of Sluys, it was vaunted, could, if placed side by side, have bridged the whole Channel. The nobility and gentlemen of France seemed every one burning with desire to avenge the injuries and defeats they had so often suffered from the English. The news of this stupendous armament spread dismay through the country; troops were assembled, beacons erected, and the Earl of Arundel was appointed high admiral, with orders to destroy the ships of the enemy the moment they landed, and leave the inhabitants to lay waste the country before them, and then deal with



From the Froissart MS. in the British Museum.

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TOURNAMENT AT ST. INGLEVERE, NEAR CALAIS.

IN THIS TOURNAMENT THREE FRENCH KNIGHTS, THE CHALLENGERS, HELD THE LISTS FOR THIRTY DAYS AGAINST ALL COMERS FROM ENGLAND AND ELSEWHERE. AMONG THE ENGLISH KNIGHTS WAS SIR JOHN HOLLAND, HALF-BROTHER TO RICHARD II.

them at leisure. But the fate of this armada was the same as that which has regularly attended all yet directed against the British isles. It was dispersed by a terrible tempest; the army was disbanded; and the Earl of Arundel, executing his commission with great vigour, took 160 vessels, laden chiefly with wine, relieved the garrison of Brest, and then, proceeding to the port of Sluys, destroyed all the ships there, and laid waste the country round to the distance of ten leagues.

After this brilliant issue of the threatened danger, the nation was all gaiety and rejoicing. But the factious Gloucester resolved that his royal nephew should not rejoice long. He collected his partisans, and determined to drive the king's favourites from office. They contended that the people were so fleeced by the tax-gatherers, that the landowners could not collect their rents, and that the ministers and their officers embezzled the public moneys. The first on whom they meant to open their charge was the chancellor, De la Pole, the new Earl of Suffolk. The chancellor opened the Parliament which met at Westminster, in October, 1386, with a bold announcement; the king, he said, was resolved to punish the French for their menaced invasion, by passing over at the head of a suitable armament, and carrying the war into France. He requested them to take into consideration the necessary supplies for so great a national enterprise. But the Lords and Commons met this by a joint petition for the dismissal of the ministers and members of council, and especially of the chancellor. The king, much enraged, at

JOHN OF GAUNT, DUKE OF LANCASTER.

(From a painting on glass in All Souls' College, Oxford.)

first contemplated—what was long afterwards so fatally done by Charles I.—seizing the leaders of the opposition, but, finding that he should not be supported in this out of doors, he retired to his palace at Eltham, and, then, giving way, drove to town, dismissed the obnoxious ministers, and made the Bishop of Hereford treasurer. But this concession, so far from appeasing Gloucester and his adherents, only made them feel surer of their real object. They impeached the chancellor, and, though they could prove little against him, they caused him to be imprisoned during the king's pleasure, and fined. So long as the Parliament sat, Suffolk suffered his sentence; but as soon as it was dissolved the king liberated him.

Emboldened by this second success, the opposition proposed to establish a committee, with authority to reform the Government. The king indignantly declared that he would never consent, but would dissolve the Parliament. But again the Commons coolly presented to him the statute by which Edward II. had been deposed, and at this significant hint the king gave way, and signed a commission, appointing a council of fourteen persons—prelates and peers—including the three great officers of state, all of Gloucester's faction, except Neville, Archbishop of York. They were empowered to inquire into everything in the household, the ministry, the courts of law, and the condition of the people. Gloucester was at the head, and the king, now nearly twenty-one years of age, was virtually deposed. The whole sovereign prerogative lay in the council, and for twelve months—the term assigned to this junto—Richard was nothing.

It was not to be expected that a young monarch of Richard's quick feelings could tamely acquiesce in such a tyrannic tutelage as this. His favourites did their part in stimulating him to resistance. At the close of the session of Parliament he entered a protest against this invasion of the royal prerogative, and began to seek the means to break up this irksome circle of control. He sounded the sheriffs of the counties, but they had been appointed by his uncles, and he found them in their interest. He therefore set out on a sort of royal progress, and used every endeavour to make himself popular with his subjects. Wherever he came he marked his arrival by some act of grace. The gentlemen of the county and the burghers of the principal towns were invited to his court, and were received with the utmost affability. This won greatly upon them, and there was a general avowal of a determination to stand by him and the royal authority. He went to York, to Chester, to Shrewsbury, and thence to Nottingham. At the two latter places he held councils of the judges, and took their opinion on the conditions which the Parliament had forced upon him. Here the judges, who in those days were not independent of the Crown as they are at present, proved as subservient to the king as Parliament had shown itself subservient to the aristocratic faction; declared that the commission was wholly subversive of the constitution; that those who introduced the measure, or induced the king to consent to it, were liable to capital punishment; that all who compelled him to observe it, or prevented his exercise of his rights, were traitors; that the king, and not the Lords and Commons, had the power to determine the order in which questions should be debated in Parliament; that it was for the king to dissolve Parliament at pleasure. Still more: that the Lords and Commons had no power to impeach the king's ministers, officers, or justices; that those who introduced and passed the statute of deposition of Edward II. were traitors; and that the judgment against the Earl of Suffolk was unconstitutional and invalid altogether.

This sweeping judgment, which annihilated the power of Parliament, and made the Crown all but independent, was signed and sealed by the judges, in the presence of the Archbishops of York and Dublin, the Bishops of Durham, Chichester, and Bangor, the Duke of Ireland, the Earl of Suffolk, and two other counsellors.

Armed with this potent instrument, Richard prepared to take vengeance on his dictators. He determined to arrest the chief of his opponents, and send them to be judged before the very men who had thus prejudged them. Thomas Usk was appointed sub-sheriff of Middlesex; a bill of indictment was prepared; Sir Nicholas Brember, who had been three times Mayor of London, undertook to influence the city, and even swore in different companies "to stand to the death for the king." The commission was to expire on the 19th of November, and on the 10th Richard entered London amidst the acclamations of the people. The mayor and principal citizens wore the royal livery of white and crimson, and a vast crowd attended him to St. Paul's, and thence to his palace of Westminster.

Everything appeared conspiring to his wishes; he retired to rest elated with his success, and calculating on the defeat of his enemies; but when he awoke in the morning it was to a sad reverse. He learned that a strong force, stated at 40,000 men, had arrived in the vicinity of the city, under the command of the Duke of Gloucester and the Earls of Arundel and Nottingham. During the whole time that he had been making his preparations to seize the members of the council they had been carefully watching and cautiously following him. The very day after the judges had delivered their decision at Nottingham, and bound themselves to keep it profoundly secret, one of them in the other interest, Sir Richard Fulthorpe, had betrayed the whole matter to the Earl of Kent, and through him to the Duke of Gloucester. A royal proclamation was issued, forbidding the citizens to aid or supply with provisions the armed force without: but the confederates, the next day advancing to Hackney, sent in a letter to the mayor and corporation, commanding them, under menace of severe penalties, to give their assistance to the loyal object of delivering the king from the hands of traitors, and requiring an immediate answer. On the 13th the Earls of Derby and Warwick went out and joined them at Waltham Cross, and the members of the commission "appealed," as they termed it, of treason the Archbishop of York, the Duke of Ireland, the Earl of Suffolk, Sir Robert Tresilian, and Sir Nicholas Brember.

This "appeal" they sent to the king by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Lords Cobham, Lovel, and Devereux. Richard was obliged to give way, for he now perceived that, after all, the city was not with him; and on Sunday, the 17th, the appellants marched into London, and, appearing before the king in Westminster Hall, formally preferred the charge of high treason against the aforesaid persons. The accused fled. De la Pole, the Earl of Suffolk, succeeded in reaching France, where he soon after died. De Vere, the Duke of Ireland, hastened to Wales, where the letters of the king overtook him, commanding him to raise the royal standard, and promising to join him on the first opportunity. The duke was encouraged by the adherence of Molyneux, the constable of Chester, who came with a strong body of archers; but Gloucester, who only wanted a plea for deposing his nephew, eagerly seized on this circumstance, and agreed with Arundel, Warwick, and Sir Thomas Mortimer at Huntingdon, to "depose Richard, and take the crown into his own custody." De Vere was rapidly marching towards London, but was met by Gloucester and Lord Derby, Lancaster's son, at Radcot Bridge, in Oxfordshire, and utterly routed. Molyneux was slain, but De Vere made his escape to Ireland, and thence to Holland, where he died about four years afterwards.

The successful appellants returned to London at the head of their 40,000 men, and presented thirty-nine articles of impeachment against the five already named, the Archbishop of York, Suffolk, De Vere, Tresilian the judge, and Brember, Mayor of London. All, except Brember, who was in prison, had fled, and all the judges, except Sir William Skepworth, were arrested as they sat in their courts, and committed to the Tower. The king demanded the opinion of the principal lawyers of the day on the validity of the impeachment, who unanimously declared it to be informal and illegal. But the peers determined to proceed; on which the bishops and abbots all protested against taking any part in judgments of blood, and left the house in a body. The accused were condemned and adjudged to death; but only Sir Nicholas Brember and Tresilian the judge—who was hated by the people for his bloody sentences on those involved in the late insurrection, and who was betrayed in his concealment by a servant—were executed.

Nothing could be more arbitrary than the proceedings of this "Wonderful Parliament," as it was called. Brember, who was a commoner, was adjudged and condemned by the peers, who were certainly not his peers. The Archbishop of York had crossed to Flanders, where he passed the short remainder of his days as a humble parish priest.

The "Wonderful Parliament," or, as others termed it, the "Merciless Parliament," which sat all the spring of 1388, and was dissolved on the 3rd of June, employed itself, at the instigation of the vindictive Gloucester, who had a savage thirst of blood, in imprisoning, condemning, and driving away the king's friends, even to his confessor. The judges who gave the extra-judicial answers to the king at Nottingham were condemned to death; but, at the intercession of the bishops, were banished to Ireland; while Blake, the secretary who drew up those answers, and Usk, who had been made under-sheriff, were put to death. Sir John Beauchamp, Sir James Berners, Sir John Salisbury, and Sir Simon Burley were all executed, Salisbury being drawn and hanged. Gloucester did not suffer the Parliament to dissolve without an order for the expulsion of the Bohemians who attended the queen, or without passing acts to incapacitate the king from reversing the attainders which they had issued. This strange Parliament at once declared that its judgments should never be reversed, nor any of its statutes ever repealed. Yet it declared that it had pronounced things treason which had never been so held before, and therefore no judge should ever make its example a precedent. It gave to the appellants £20,000 in remuneration for their services, and granted to them and their friends a full indemnity, besides a general pardon to the opposite party, with the exception of eighteen persons named.

Richard, stunned, as it were, by this stern and sanguinary demonstration on the part of his great and haughty relatives, remained for about twelve months passive, and in a manner extinguished in his own kingdom. But we may rest satisfied that he never for a moment in his own mind intended that this state of things should last a day longer than he could help, or that they who now carried measures against him with a high hand and a combined power, should escape their due punishment. He felt that the "sons of Zeruiah were too hard for him;" that his arbitrary uncles and cousins had artfully raised the public will against him, and that it was vain to resist. Gloucester had done his bloody work; and it only required time to make the nation feel repugnance to the agency of so much cruelty. His administration did not by its splendour conceal the hideousness of the acts on which his power was based. Arundel, indeed, did some brave deeds at sea; but the only brilliant deed on land was the battle of Otterburn, which has been so celebrated by the minstrels of that day, as may be seen in Percy's "Reliques of English Poetry." It was fought on the 15th of August, 1388, and Douglas, the Scottish chief, was killed; but on the English side Sir Henry Percy—the celebrated Hotspur—and Ralph Percy were taken prisoners, and the English, according to Froissart, were driven from the field; though English writers give a different account—each party, in fact, claiming the victory.

By degrees the terror which Gloucester had inspired began to die away from the minds of men; they began to sympathise with their youthful king, kept in such unworthy subjection, and to offer to him their aid and services. No sooner did Richard feel conscious of this change in the public feeling than he gave one of those proofs of high thought, and bold, prompt action, which, if they had been the results of a steady, energetic temperament, and not mere evanescent flashes, would have made his enemies stoop in awe before him, and his reign fortunate. In a great council held in May, 1389, he suddenly addressed his uncle Gloucester: "How old do you think I am?" "Your highness," replied Gloucester, "is in your twenty-second year." "Then," said the king, "I must surely be old enough to manage my own concerns. I have been longer under the control of guardians than any ward in my dominions. I thank ye, my lords, for your past services, but I require them no longer."

Before the council could recover from its surprise he demanded the seals from the Archbishop of Canterbury, and gave them to William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, and the keys of the exchequer from the Bishop of Hereford, handing them to one of his own friends. Gloucester, after a private interview with his nephew, finding it impossible to move him, retired into the country. Richard retained his uncle, York, and his cousin, Henry of Bolingbroke, in his favour, and entrusted them with the chief administration of affairs.

For about eight years Richard ruled with a moderation and a deference to the rights of Parliament and the people, which won him much popularity. He, on one occasion, voluntarily remitted some subsidies, declaring that he would not call for them till he really needed them. His uncle Lancaster returned from Spain, and having placed his two daughters on the thrones of that country and of Portugal, he appeared satisfied in his ambition, and disposed not only to acquiesce in the sway of his nephew, but also to reconcile him to the offending Gloucester, whom he brought again to court. It was not long, however, before there was great division between the royal brothers; for, Lancaster's wife being dead, he married Catherine Swynford, a daughter of a private gentleman of Hainault, who had been his mistress, and by whom he had several children. His brothers York and Gloucester were highly incensed at this marriage of the great John of Gaunt, regarding the lady of far too inferior birth to enter into their alliance; but Richard not only countenanced his uncle in this honourable proceeding, but passed an act through Parliament to legitimise the children, and created the eldest son Earl of Somerset.

By this rupture between the royal brothers, the power of Richard was left unassailed—which it never was when they were united—and the country enjoyed internal tranquillity. He ceded to his uncle of Lancaster the province of Guienne

BETROTHAL OF THE PRINCESS ISABELLA TO RICHARD. (*See p.* 472.)

for life; but, as the inhabitants remonstrated loudly against this act, it was finally revoked with the duke's consent. He concluded a peace with France in 1394, which also included Scotland; Robert II. having died in 1390, and John, his eldest son, now reigning under the title of Robert III.; the Scots entertaining the same prejudice against a king of the name of John as the French and English, each nation remembering with disgust the reign of a King John.

Meantime Richard frequently met his Parliament, and appeared on all occasions anxious to possess its approbation. He even on one occasion asked his officers of state to resign, and place themselves at the bar of Parliament, requesting every one who had cause of complaint to prefer it. Pleased with this condescension, Parliament not only bore willing testimony to the honour of the ministers, but were ready to meet all the king's demands for money. By consent of Parliament, also, he recalled such of the bishops who had been banished to Ireland as now survived; made his confessor a bishop; and, moreover, on hearing of the death of the Duke of Ireland, he restored the earldom of Oxford in favour of his uncle, Sir Aubrey de Vere, and afterwards had the body of the duke brought from Louvain, and re-interred with great state in the church of Colne.

At this time, also, after much dispute with Rome regarding the appointment by the Pope of foreigners to English bishoprics and livings, he settled that question on a better basis than it had yet occupied, passing the last and most comprehensive of the statutes of provisors, by which it is provided that any persons receiving such investment from Rome, or carrying causes there, shall, with all their abettors, suffer forfeiture of all their goods, chattels, and lands, wherever found, and be put out of the king's protection.

These were years in which Richard appeared to realise the early auguries of his reign, and act with such wisdom and moderation as make the latter portion of his days a marvel and a sad mystery. But we believe the mystery will be solved by the fact that he now—that is, in June, 1394—lost his excellent queen, the good Queen Anne. She died at her favourite palace of Shene; and Richard, who had been most ardently attached to her, was so beside himself with grief that, in a state of frenzy, he ordered the palace of Shene to be levelled with the ground; and the rooms where Anne died were actually dismantled.

From all that we learn of Anne it appears very evident that her influence over Richard was of the most beneficial kind, and that the longer she lived the more prudent and popular he became. With her he lost his compass and his guiding star, and wandered off the good way.

In the immediate bitterness of his grief, however, he was advised, in order to divert his sorrow, to make a visit to his Irish dominions. There was certainly confusion enough there to occupy his thoughts. The wars of the last three monarchs, and the troubles of the second Edward, had withdrawn their attention from Ireland, and both the native and the English races there had made great encroachments on the authority of the Government. The revenues had formerly produced a surplus of £30,000; they were not now equal to the necessary expenses of the management of the island. The natives, asserting their ancient territories, were fast enclosing the English in narrower bounds, while the English were at variance amongst themselves. They were divided into two classes—those who had helped to conquer the country, and those who had been recently sent there by the English Government. There were, therefore, English by race merely, and English by birth. The descendants of the original invaders had, in proportion as they were remote from the seat of government, grown independent, and in many cases adopted the language and manners of the natives. Many of these men retained great numbers of armed followers, made inroads on their neighbours, ruled as kings in their own districts, and expelled all thence who would not conform to their will. Such was Thomas Fitzmaurice, who, to secure his goodwill, was created Earl of Desmond, and who yet was rather a terror than a strength to the Government.

These old settlers, the English by race merely, were very jealous of new arrivals, many of them being poor courtiers who were sent there—as they were in later days sent to our colonies—to help themselves to what they could secure, and others banished men. These were supported by the English Government as a counterbalance to the power of the native chiefs, and of the English by race. Edward III. had indeed forbade any office to be held but by Englishmen still connected with England by property or office; but this produced such a ferment among the old Englishry that it was obliged to be abandoned. While these feuds and divisions weakened the English party, the native chiefs pushed on their advances, and the greater part of Ulster was recovered by the

O'Neills, much of Connaught was regained by the O'Conors, and the O'Briens made equal conquests in Leinster. To prevent amalgamation of the English chiefs with the native Irish, and thus the strengthening of their formidable native power, Edward III. had passed the famous statute of Kilkenny which made it high treason to marry with the Irish.

It was in the hope that an English nobleman, residing in the country with a permanent right, and with almost regal power, might reduce the island to order, that Richard had made the Earl of Oxford Duke of Ireland, and granted to him and his heirs for ever all the lands which he should conquer from the native Irish, except such as they had retaken from the Crown or from former grantees. The hopes which had been entertained from this scheme were defeated by the king's feud with the barons, and by the attainder and banishment of Oxford.

Richard now set out to reduce the different factions, and restore order himself, at the head of 4,000 men-at-arms and 30,000 archers, and attended by the Duke of Gloucester and the Earls of Rutland and Nottingham. He landed at Waterford in October, 1394, and at the approach of so effective a force the most daring chieftains retired into their bogs and mountains. Such was the vigour with which Richard on this occasion prosecuted his object—no doubt finding a great relief to his mind in action—that very soon the Irish made terms of surrender, and the four principal kings, O'Neill, O'Brien, O'Conor, and McMurrough, came in and attended the king to Dublin, where they were, no doubt, much to the annoyance of their wild Irish habits, obliged to assume the outward smoothness of civilisation, most reluctantly induced to receive the honour of knighthood, to be arrayed in robes of state, and feasted in all decorum at the king's table.

The Irish chieftains, to the number of seventy-five, did homage, and agreed to the payment of a yearly tribute. Richard never on any occasion, not even in the Wat Tyler riots, displayed more energy and tact. He had all the qualities which should distinguish a monarch. He reformed the abuses of the Government, redressed grievances, enforced the laws, removed tyrannical officers, and thus reconciled the minds of the Irish, and re-established the English supremacy.

This good work was interrupted by a violent dispute between the Lollards and the Church at home. The Reformers had acquired much power, and, feeling their influence amongst the people, they prepared a sweeping petition to the Commons, containing many facts which were yet too strong for reception by the Government. They objected to the celibacy of the clergy, and complained that, by accepting offices under Government, and being ministers of state, and even generals, they were attempting to do the impossible thing—namely, to serve God and Mammon. They declared that by teaching transubstantiation they led to idolatry; that through the confessional they acquired a despotism over the people; by authorising war and criminal executions they opposed the law of Christ, which was one of love and mercy; and they even asserted that by licensing men to exercise the trade of goldsmiths and swordsmiths they violated the principles of the Gospel, which were those of simplicity and peace. Though no one was found hardy enough to present the petition abounding with doctrines which, though they had existed in the New Testament for nearly fourteen centuries, were still too new to the public for acceptance, yet the clergy were alarmed at this demonstration, and solicited the protection of the king, who severely reprimanded the leaders of the Lollards, and ordered all teachers of that persuasion to be expelled from the university of Oxford. Good Queen Anne was gone, and a new era, with new influences and fortunes, was at hand.

Richard now astonished the whole country by proposing to marry the eldest daughter of the King of France. The strong antipathy which the long and cruel wars had nourished between the two nations made them already regard each other as natural and hereditary enemies. Both the people of England and France, therefore, were surprised at this proposal, and averse from it. But the people are little consulted in any age in these matters; and the proposal, after some discussion at the French court, was well entertained. At the English court it was far from popular. The princes and barons looked on the French wars as the sources of fresh military glory and promotion. The Duke of Gloucester most of all expressed his opposition to it. He had more reasons than one. The first was, that he had a daughter whom he would fain see married to Richard. By this alliance he could calculate on his descendants succeeding to the throne of England, even if he could not himself usurp it. During the king's life, with his easy and pleasure-loving disposition, he could calculate on engrossing the real power of the State. Not less strange was his second reason. If the king allied himself to France, he would thus greatly strengthen his authority at home, and Gloucester was too far-seeing not to perceive that Richard, who never forgot an injury, would then be in a position to revenge himself on him for his past attempts to usurp the control over his nephew, and especially for the armed conspiracy which had destroyed his favourite ministers, and suspended his prerogative for twelve months. That this marriage was a matter entirely of policy was clear enough. The French princess was a mere child ten years of age. The preliminaries were, however, soon concluded, and the ceremony took place in 1396.

The conduct of Richard after this marriage was such as to lead the people the more sensibly to deplore the death of the good Queen Anne. Instead of the better spirit which had distinguished his latter years, instead of the wise and active conduct which he had displayed in Ireland while under the influence of a salutary sorrow, a light and thoughtless disposition had taken its place, as if a mere girlish wife had brought with her an atmosphere of trifling and frivolity. With the exception of his harsh treatment of the city a few years before, and the deprivation of its charter, which, though soon restored, had left a lively memory of the arbitrary fact, there was not much in Richard's political conduct to complain of. But his personal character was rapidly deteriorating. He lived in a continual course of feasting and dissipation, and thus wasted the funds he had received with the queen, and the resources derived from his people.

Amongst the principal favourites of this time were his half-brother, the murderer, Sir John Holland. who had been on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in penance for his crimes, and now was dignified with the title of the Earl of Huntingdon, as his brother was with that of the Earl of Kent. Through the hands of these men all favours and honours passed, and we cannot suppose that their conversations and counsels were very good for the king. His household was on a most ruinous scale, consisting, it is said, of not less than 10,000 persons, and the riot and follies carried on there excited great disgust.

All these matters were carefully noted by the discontented Duke of Gloucester, still more morose from the king's refusal of his daughter, on the plea of her being too near akin. It was in vain that the king made him rich presents to win his good-will. He was still sullen, morose, and destitute of all courtesy, returning the attentions of the nobles with abrupt and curt answers, so that they said amongst themselves, if ever Gloucester could stir up a war he would.

At length Richard resolved to strike his long deferred blow. He invited the Earl of Warwick to dinner, and then, the latter being off his guard, he had him arrested at the house of the chancellor, near Temple Bar, and committed to the Tower. The primate was made use of to bring his brother, the Earl of Arundel, to a private interview with the king, who instantly arrested him and sent him to Carisbrooke Castle. But perhaps the most revolting of these insidious modes of arrest was that of the Duke of Gloucester himself. Richard, while intending to sacrifice his uncle's life, did not hesitate to pay him a visit at his castle of Pleshy, in Essex. Here Gloucester came forth with his wife and daughter to meet him, without any suspicion, and, according to the account of the rolls of Parliament, with a dutiful procession. The king caused him to be seized and hurried on board a vessel by the earl marshal, and conveyed to Calais. It is said by contemporary chroniclers that, while this was doing, Richard was conversing in a friendly guise with the duchess. Froissart says Richard was kindly entertained, requested Gloucester to accompany him to London, and had him seized on the way. This does not appear probable if the parliamentary rolls are correct. But in any case the manner of the thing was treacherous and unworthy of a great monarch.

The sudden disappearance of the duke alarmed all his friends and partisans, who believed that he was murdered, and they trembled for their own security. To pacify the public mind, Richard issued a proclamation, stating that these arrests had been made with the full assent of the Dukes of Lancaster and York, and of their sons and all the leading members of the council; that they were made, not on account of the transactions of the tenth and eleventh years of his reign, for which bills of indemnity had been given, but for recent offences; and that no one need be alarmed on account of participation in those past proceedings.

This was to lull into security fresh victims, and to obtain that sanction from Lancaster, York, and their sons, which Richard pretended to have had, and which was not true. These princes were at Nottingham, and Richard determined to retort upon them their conduct towards his favourites. He therefore hastened down thither, and as these noblemen were at dinner he suddenly summoned them to the gate, and compelled them to set their seals to a form of arrest which had been prepared for the purpose. They were made to say, "We appeal Thomas Duke of Gloucester, Richard Earl of Arundel, and Thomas Earl of Warwick, as traitors to your majesty and realm," and to call for trial upon them.

To secure his measures Richard employed every means to impress the Parliament and public with awe. Great preparations were made for the assembling of a Parliament which was to decide the fate of a prince of the blood, and one so powerful and popular, as well as of some of the chief nobles of the realm. It is said that the sheriffs had been tampered with—a most base and unconstitutional act, and which, resorted to in the assembling of this famous Parliament, opened the way for much subsequent corruption of the kind. A wooden shed of large extent was erected near Westminster Hall, for the reception of so numerous an assembly as was summoned to give the fuller sanction to its decrees, and the lords came with such prodigious retinues, no doubt for their own safety, that they not only occupied all the lodgings of London, but of the towns and villages for ten miles round.

The king came to Westminster, attended by 600 men-at-arms, wearing the royal livery of the hart, and 200 archers, raised in Cheshire. On the second day of the session, Sir John Bussy, the

ARREST OF THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER. (*See* p. 472.)

Speaker, and a thorough creature of the king, petitioned that the clergy might appoint proxies, the canons forbidding their presence at any trials of blood, and Lord Thomas Percy was appointed their procurator. The Parliament passed whatever Richard was pleased to dictate to it. It annulled the commission of regency and the statute confirming it, passed in the tenth year of his reign. It abrogated all the acts which attainted the king's ministers — though the Parliament which passed them and the people had sworn to maintain them for ever—and declared that they had been extorted by force. It revoked all pardons granted heretofore to Gloucester, Arundel, and Warwick.

This facile assembly first impeached Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, as the aider and abettor of the accused noblemen, for having moved and advised the arrest and execution of Sir Simon Burley and Sir James Berners, contrary to the wishes of the king, and that while chancellor, and bound to support the rights of the Crown. The archbishop rose to defend himself; but Richard, fearful of the effect of his eloquence, desired him to waive awhile his observations, on pretence of requiring more time to consider the matter; but the next day he was declared to be guilty, and banished for life.

The following day, September 21st, the charges were read to the lords against the three nobles. They were that Gloucester and Arundel had compelled the king, under menace of his life, to sign the commission of regency; that at Hornsey Park they had drawn to their party the Earl of Warwick and Sir Thomas Mortimer, and by force had compelled the king to do their will. The Earls of Rutland, Kent, Huntingdon, Somerset, Salisbury, and Nottingham, and the Lords Spenser and Scrope were accused of the same crime; that at Huntingdon they had conspired to depose the king, and shown him the statute of the deposition of Edward II., and had also insisted on the death of Sir Simon Burley, in opposition to the king's will.

The Earl of Arundel pleaded not guilty and former pardons; but he was condemned and executed. Warwick was convicted of high treason; but, on account of his submissive behaviour, his life was spared, and he was banished to the Isle of Man.

On the 24th a mandate was issued by the king and his council in Parliament to the earl marshal to bring his prisoner, the Duke of Gloucester from Calais to the bar of the House. Three days after this an answer was returned by the earl marshal that "he could not produce the said duke before the king and his council in that Parliament, for that, being in his custody in the king's prison at Calais, he there died."

The simple unexplanatory abruptness of this announcement is particularly startling. It impresses the mind with the conviction of foul play, and suggests that the king—not daring to bring to further trial a prince so nearly related to the Crown, and so highly esteemed by the people, and yet resolved not to let him escape—had procured his assassination. Apoplexy and other things were talked of, but there could be but one opinion of his end—murder. How this was effected has never been discovered. When Henry Bolingbroke had usurped Richard's throne, and it was his particular interest to prove Richard a murderer of their common uncle, one John Hall, a servant of the Earl of Nottingham, was brought forward, who swore that to his knowledge the duke was taken from the prison to an inn, called the Prince's Inn, and there smothered between two beds by a servant of the king and another of the Earl of Rutland. Though eight persons were named in the paper as being concerned in the transaction, none of these were ever examined, nor was Hall brought before any judge; but, having made this confession, he was at once beheaded. It appears sufficiently clear, therefore, that this was an invention of Bolingbroke's to blacken the character of Richard. Froissart says he was strangled in prison by four people with towels; but the mode matters little: the fact of Gloucester's murder cannot admit of a doubt, and whatever it was, the Parliament appears not to have troubled itself about it. They declared, both Lords and Commons, that he was a traitor, and confiscated all his property to the Crown. The rest of the nobles and prelates named in the indictment were then conditionally pardoned, except those who took up arms against the king in his eleventh year, including Lord Cobham, who was banished to Jersey for life, and Mortimer, who had fled into the wilds of Ireland, and was outlawed.

What is extraordinary is, that several of the very peers who were engaged in these transactions, now declared treasonable, sat in judgment on their more unlucky accomplices. The Duke of York, the Bishop of Winchester, and Sir Richard Scrope, had been members of Gloucester's commission of regency; and Derby and Nottingham were two of the five who appealed to the favourites of treason. Some of these were not only winked at, but even promoted when the trial was over. Richard, indeed, in Parliament, fully exculpated them, asserting that, though for a time deceived by the pretences of Gloucester, they had abandoned his cause like good and loyal subjects. He then created his cousins, Derby and Rutland, Dukes of Hereford and Albemarle; his two half-brothers, the Earls of Kent and Huntingdon, Dukes of Surrey and Exeter; the Earl of Nottingham, Duke of Norfolk; the Earl of Somerset, Marquis of Dorset; the Lords Despenser, Nevil, Percy, and William Scrope, Earls of Gloucester, Westmoreland, Worcester, and Wiltshire.

On the last day of the session of this servile Parliament the peers took an oath that all the judgments passed in this Parliament should have the full force of statutes for ever; that any one attempting to reverse them should be held to be a traitor; and that the clergy should excommunicate him. The Commons held out their hands in acquiescence with this oath, and Lord Thomas Percy, the proxy of the clergy, swore on their behalf. The Parliament was then prorogued till after the Christmas holidays, when it met at Gloucester.

Perhaps no period of our history exhibits a monarch more reckless of the restraints of the constitution than Richard at this epoch; nor a Parliament more servilely disposed to grovel at his feet, and surrender every valuable right. Before closing its sessions, the Commons not only granted him most liberal supplies, but a tax on wool, wool-fells, and hides, not for the year as previously, but for *life*, thus rendering him, to a great degree, independent of Parliament; and Richard, again, to provide against any repeal of this munificent grant, published a general pardon, which, however, was to become void the moment any future Parliament attempted to repeal this act.

But this vile Parliament went still further in surrendering the birthrights of the people. It had been customary to appoint a committee of the peers and judges formerly, to remain after the business of the session was completed, to hear and determine on such petitions as had not been already answered. Advantage was now taken to seize on this form of a committee to supersede the general functions of Parliament; and twelve peers and six commoners, not judges or justices, were not only invested with the powers of the ancient committees, but also to "hear, examine, and determine all matters and subjects which had been moved in the presence of the king, with all the dependencies thereof." One half only of these were required to attend, so that to nine people were transferred all the powers and authority of Parliament!

The immediate object of this stretch of parliamentary and, under its guise, of kingly power, was to execute the designs of the monarch which led to his ruin. Richard was of that light and sensitive character, and had been early so imbued with the idea of the divinity that "doth hedge a king," that he was easily led on to the most arbitrary conduct. In the late proceedings against Gloucester and his adherents he had broken unceremoniously through all the restraints of the constitution, and the obsequiousness of Parliament induced him now to imagine that he had placed himself above all law. Parliament had granted him supplies for life, and with the aid of the committee to which Parliament had so tamely resigned its prerogative, "all persons well affected to the king," he could, he imagined, do just as he pleased; and he lost no time in putting this to the proof. He had destroyed Gloucester; he resolved to cut off or remove other overgrown relatives and nobles.

The lively and strong memory which Richard had always shown of past injuries, but never more so than during the late trials, struck terror into the hearts of many who were conscious that they had offended. Amongst these was the Duke of Norfolk. At present he stood apparently high amongst Richard's friends; but he was well aware how slippery was that position, and he was conscious that his reluctance to carry out the bloody proscription against Gloucester would be treasured up in the king's never-failing remembrance for the first tempting occasion. Of the original lords appellant he only and the Duke of Hereford now remained

Norfolk happening to overtake Hereford, on the road between Brentford and London, the following conversation took place, according to Hereford's statement of it as it still remains on the rolls of Parliament:—

Norfolk. We are on the point of being undone.

Hereford. Why so?

Norfolk. On account of the affair at Radcot Bridge.

Hereford. How can that be, since the king has granted us pardon, and has declared in Parliament that we behaved as good and loyal subjects?

Norfolk. Nevertheless, our fate will be like that of others before us. He will annul that record.

Hereford. It will be marvellous, indeed, if the king, after having said so before the people, should cause it to be annulled.

Norfolk. It is a marvellous and false world that we live in; for I know well that, had it not been for some persons, my lord your father of Lancaster and yourself would have been taken or killed, when you went to Windsor after the Parliament. The Dukes of Albemarle and Exeter, and the Earl of Worcester and I, have pledged ourselves never to assent to the undoing of any lord without just and reasonable cause. But this malicious project belongs to the Duke of Surrey, the Earls of Wiltshire and Salisbury, drawing to themselves the Earl of Gloucester. They have sworn to undo six lords, the Dukes of Lancaster, Hereford, Albemarle, and Exeter, the Marquess of Dorset and myself; and have power to reverse the attainder of Thomas Earl of Lancaster, which would turn to the derision of us and many others.

Hereford. God forbid! It will be a wonder if the king should assent to such designs. He appears to make me good cheer, and has promised to be my good lord. Indeed, he has sworn by St. Edward to be a good lord to me and others.

Norfolk. So he has often sworn to me by God's body, but I do not trust him the more for that. He is attempting to draw the Earl of March into the scheme of the four lords to destroy the others.

Hereford. If that be the case, we can never trust them.

Norfolk. Certainly not. Though they may not accomplish their purpose now, they will contrive to destroy us in our houses ten years hence.

Hereford must have taken the earliest opportunity to communicate this confidential conversation to the king. It showed him that the king was carefully watching those who had formerly appeared as his enemies. He was in haste, therefore, to secure himself by the sacrifice of the friend who had thus put him on his guard. Whatever were the steps he took for this end, he received a summons to attend the king at Haywood, where he was made to pledge himself on his allegiance to lay the whole of the preceding conversation before the council. Hereford took care not to leave the king without obtaining a full pardon for himself, under the Great Seal, for all the treasons, misprisions, and offences that he had ever committed.

Accordingly he appeared in full Parliament, and laid this statement before them; but it contained so much which would naturally incense the king, that he went to Richard the next day, and, throwing himself on his knees before him, once more craved his pardon, declaring that, when he took part formerly in measures against the king, he did not know that he was doing wrong, but that now he knew it, and implored forgiveness for it. All this anxiety showed that he was conscious of having entered into the very conspiracies which he was now endeavouring to throw off upon others.

Richard, with his usual smooth duplicity, once more assured him before the whole Parliament of his entire pardon, and promised him great favour. But Richard had, no doubt, already made up his mind as to what he would do. He had here strong hold on his turbulent and disaffected nobles, and he never let such advantages escape him. The great object, therefore, of obtaining a committee of men devoted to him, in whom were concentrated all the powers of Parliament, was to deal with these two nobles, who were dangerous to the solidity of his throne.

To this convenient committee, this sort of pocket Parliament, Richard referred the decision of the cause between them. Norfolk, aware of danger, had not appeared in his place in Parliament; but he was summoned by proclamation, and, on surrender, was brought before Richard at Oswaldster. There he boldly declared his innocence, and denounced the whole of Hereford's story as false, "the lies of a false traitor."

Richard had them now in his power, and ordered them both into custody. He proceeded to Bristol, where his little pocket Parliament went on exercising all the functions and authority of the real Parliament; and Richard caused them to enact that their statutes were of equal authority with those of a full Parliament, and should take the same effect; that all prelates before taking possession of their sees, all tenants of the Crown before receiving possession of their lands, should take an oath to observe the enactments of this junto as perfectly as those of Parliament itself, and that any person attempting to alter or revoke them should be guilty of treason. No more absolute independence of Parliament was ever assumed in this country. The violations of the constitution for which Charles I. afterwards lost his head were not more outrageous than these.

The controversy between Hereford and Norfolk, it was decreed by this committee, should be referred to a high court of chivalry, which was appointed to take place at Windsor on the 29th of April. As Hereford here persisted in the charge, and Norfolk as stoutly denied it, and as no witnesses could be brought, the court determined that the decision of the question should be made by wager of battle, which was to take place at Coventry on the 16th of September.

There, at the moment that the two antagonists were on the point of running a tilt at each other, the king threw down his warder, and the earl marshal stayed the combat. The king then pronounced sentence of banishment upon them both, which, he informed them, was the judgment of the council. Hereford was exiled for ten years, Norfolk for life. It is clear, from the greater severity of the sentence of Norfolk, that the charges of Hereford had told against him. He was pronounced guilty of having, on his own confession, endeavoured to excite dissensions amongst the great lords, and of having secretly opposed the repeal of the acts of Gloucester's Parliament. Richard took precautions to prevent the malcontents associating abroad so as to plot treason. The Duke of Norfolk was commanded to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and after that to reside only in Germany, Hungary, or Bohemia; and neither of the dukes was to hold any communication with the banished Archbishop of Canterbury at any time during their exile.

Hereford, a man of consummate command of his temper, cool, calculating, and as unprincipled as he was ambitious, appeared to submit to this extraordinary, and, by all, unexpected, sentence, with so much humility that he obtained from Richard various benefits which a more openly indignant man would have lost. In the first place, the king, touched by his submission, promised to shorten the term of his exile five years. He acceded to Hereford's request that letters patent should be granted to both the banished lords to appoint attorneys to take possession of any inheritances which might fall to them during their absence, though they could not be there to perform homage or swear fealty. This request has been pronounced by some historians a mysterious one; but there is no mystery about it. John of Gaunt, Hereford's father, was now old and infirm, and not likely to live long. He had so lost all that high and swelling spirit which distinguished him through a long life, that he had consented to sign the royal acts against his own family—that for the attainder of his brother Gloucester, and now for the banishment of his own son. If he died while his son was abroad under sentence of banishment, all his vast estates would pass to the Crown in default of the performance of the necessary feudal conditions of tenure. Hereford, aware of this, endeavoured to guard against it by this royal engagement, and, probably, that his design might not be too obvious, was a party to the extension of the favour to his opponent. We shall presently see that Hereford's precaution did not prevent Richard seizing on Lancaster's estates, as that sagacious nobleman feared; but it gave Hereford a grand plea for his return to vindicate his usurped rights.

The two banished dukes took their departure. Richard, to soften still more the mind of Hereford, sent to him at Calais a present of 1,000 marks. The unfortunate Norfolk, after his pilgrimage, returned, and died of a broken heart at Venice. And we may here notice what became of the exiled Archbishop of Canterbury. After residing some time in France, the Pope appointed him to the see of St. Andrews in Scotland. This step was taken at the request of Richard, who flattered himself that he had thus rendered a troublesome adversary harmless.

Richard now imagined that he had reached the summit of uncontrollable power. With his taxes secured for life, instead of being compelled every year to come to Parliament to solicit their renewal, and to be called to account by the Commons for their expenditure; with his obsequious little pocket Parliament and council ready to decree any measure that he willed, however unjust and unconstitutional; and with a standing bod of 10,000 archers, maintained out of thos foolishly-conceded life-long supplies, Richard was, in fact, an absolute monarch. Froissart says, no man, however great, dared speak against anything that he did. He had lopped off or driven away the most powerful of his nobles and kins men: and he now raised money by forced loans. He compelled the judges to expound the law at his pleasure. He forced the unhappy adherents of Gloucester to purchase and re-purchase charters of pardon; and, to obtain plenty of fines and amercements, he at one stroke outlawed seventeen counties, on the charge of having favoured his enemies at the battle of Radcot Bridge. He could accuse both sides at pleasure of being his enemies; for, while he had secretly commissioned the Duke of Ireland to take up arms, Gloucester and Hereford were ostensibly maintaining the royal cause.

The money thus extorted from his groaning subjects was spent with reckless extravagance. We have already spoken of the prodigal licence and swarming numbers of his court. That of Edward III. had been esteemed very magnificent, but this of Richard far eclipsed it; and the chroniclers describe with wonder the gorgeous furniture and equipages, the feasts and pageants of this court, which had not the martial glory to make it tolerable to the people which Edward's had. It is said that the number of tailors, cloth merchants, cooks, jewellers, and retainers in costly liveries, was something inconceivable.

But, like that of many another thoughtless king, Richard's grandeur was hollow and delusive. It had no basis in the affections of any class of the community. The friends of Gloucester and Hereford, and the other nobles who were banished, were full of violent discontent, and secretly diffused it on every side. The people saw with indignation their hard-earned money wasted on the worst of creatures. Richard had made them his enemies at the very commencement of his reign by his perfidious conduct to them in the Wat Tyler insurrection, and by the cruelty with which he pursued them afterwards. As Shakespeare makes the nobles say :—

> *Ross.* The commons hath he pilled with grievous taxes,
> And quite lost their hearts ; the nobles hath he fined
> For ancient quarrels, and quite lost their hearts.
> *Willoughby.* And daily new exactions are devised ;
> As blanks, benevolences, and I wot not what :
> But what, o' God's name, doth become of this ?
> *Northumberland.* Wars have not wasted it, for warred he hath not,
> But basely yielded upon compromise
> That which his ancestors achieved with blows.
> More hath he spent in peace than they in wars.

There wanted but a match to explode the mine, already laid by his folly and want of real regard to his people, under Richard's feet, and this came in the death of the aged John of Gaunt. He died about three months after the banishment of his son ; an event which no doubt hastened his end.

Now was seen the wisdom of Hereford's act in procuring the letters patent for the securing of his inheritance, for the arbitrary rapacity of Richard at once revealed itself, and he declared that Hereford's banishment was tantamount to outlawry, which implied forfeiture of estate ; and this dishonest and impolitic judgment a great council which he assembled, including his committee of Parliament, confirmed. It declared the patents granted both to Hereford and Norfolk were utterly illegal and void. Neither Richard nor his council hesitated, when it pleased them, to stultify and declare unlawful their own most solemn acts. In fact, all faith was banished, and government was a farce, to be followed by a tragedy.

Richard seized on the vast estates of the banished Hereford, now Duke of Lancaster, and when Henry Bowet, the duke's attorney, resisted this iniquitous proceeding, he also was arrested and condemned to death as a traitor, but let off with banishment. This most lawless deed appeared to put the climax to the national endurance. The people murmured, the nobles assumed a sullen and brooding aspect, and the whole nation was ripe for revolt.

Henry of Lancaster was not a man to let slip the favourable opportunity. He had always shown outward deference to the people ; he waited and watched every movement from Paris, where he resided, and where he had been on the point of strengthening his position by marrying the daughter of the Duke of Berri, when Richard, in alarm, sent over an embassy and defeated it.

Yet at this crisis, when Hereford, newly become Lancaster, was maddened by the seizure of all his demesnes and honours, did Richard venture to leave his kingdom, where he had not one real friend. His cousin and heir, the Earl of March, had been surprised and killed in a skirmish with the Irish. Richard, with his quick, resentful feelings, in his eagerness to revenge his loss, determined at once to go to Ireland. He appointed the Duke of York, his uncle, regent in his absence, attended mass at Windsor, and at the door of the church took wine and spices with his young queen, whom he repeatedly took up in his arms and kissed like a child, as she still was, being only about twelve years of age, saying, "Adieu, madam, adieu, till we meet again."

From Windsor, Richard, accompanied by several noblemen, marched to Bristol, where those circumstances were pressed on his attention which would have made any prudent monarch return with all speed to his capital. Reports of plots and discontents reached him from various quarters. The Londoners, who had always shown the most decided liking for the present Duke of Lancaster, on hearing of Richard's voyage for Ireland, said amongst themselves, "Now goes Richard of Bordeaux to his destruction, as sure as did Edward II., his great-grandfather. Like him, he has listened so long to evil counsellors, that it can be neither concealed nor endured any longer."

There were numbers of officers in his army who were as disaffected, and amongst these were the Lord Percy and his son. The king summoned these noblemen to his presence, but they got away into Scotland, and put themselves under the protection of King Robert. The condition of England at this moment was very miserable. There were general murmurings and divisions in the community. Robbers and robberies abounded, justice was perverted, and the people said it was time there was some remedy. The bishops and nobles got into London for safety, and those who had lost their relatives by the king's exactions rejoiced in the trouble, and wished to see it grow. In their eyes the Duke of Gloucester had been a great and plain-spoken patriot, to whom the king would not listen, and who had lost his life through his honest representations of the condition of the country.

Under such circumstances Richard set sail at

THE CHARITY OF WHITTINGTON.

From the wall painting by Henrietta Rae (Mrs. Normand) in the Royal Exchange.

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Milford Haven, and in two days, on May 31st, 1399, landed at Waterford. There he lost three weeks in waiting for the Duke of Albemarle, who was to have followed him with another force, but who is supposed to have been influenced by the prevailing disaffection. At length Richard marched on towards Kilkenny, and many of the lesser chieftains came humbly, with halters round their necks, suing for pardon. Not so the great chieftain McMurrough. He came to a parley with Scrope, the Earl of Gloucester, mounted on a magnificent grey charger, which had cost him 400 head of cattle, and brandishing a huge spear in his hand. He expressed his willingness to become a nominal vassal of the Crown, but would be free of all compulsion or conditions. Richard refused to treat with so independent an individual, but set a price on his head, and proceeded to Dublin, where he was at length joined by Albemarle, and he then again gave chase to the wild Irish chief. But in the midst of this pursuit he was suddenly arrested by news from England, which reduced all other considerations to nothing.

Lancaster had landed at Ravenspur, in Yorkshire, and was rapidly collecting an army and marching towards London. While the duke was brooding at Paris over the fresh indignity put upon him by Richard, who had sent the Earl of Salisbury to break off the match with Marie, Countess of Eu, daughter of the Duke of Berri, the exiled Archbishop of Canterbury arrived, bringing him the news of Richard's departure for Ireland, and the desire of the people of London for his arrival. To elude the vigilance of the French court, he obtained permission to visit the Duke of Brittany, and he speedily set sail from Vannes for England. Three small vessels carried the whole of his invading army—namely, the archbishop, the son of the late Earl of Arundel, fifteen lancers, and a few servants. But he had full reliance on the spirit which then animated all England. He was quickly joined by the Earls of Westmoreland and Northumberland, to whom he declared, in the White Friars at Doncaster, that he came only to reclaim the honours and estates of his father, which were secured to him by the king himself by his letters patent, and he swore to make no claim upon the crown.

His uncle, the Duke of York, as regent of the kingdom in the royal absence, advanced to St. Albans ostensibly to oppose his progress; but it could not be supposed that he was very hearty in the cause, after having seen one brother murdered by the king, and the only son of the other, the great John of Gaunt, expelled and thwarted by him. The favourites of the king, the Earl of Wiltshire, Bussy, and Green, who were not only members of the infamous council, but had been farmers and exactors of the oppressive taxes, showed a prudent doubt of any sure protection from such a champion as York. They had been appointed to wait on the young queen at Wallingford, but they took flight, leaving her to fate, and fled to Bristol, in expectation of meeting the king. York very soon took the same direction, no doubt in the desire to resign, as soon as possible, his responsibility into the hands of the king, for he felt that there was no reliance on his army.

Thus he left the way open to the capital, and Lancaster advanced along it with equal rapidity and success. On all the estates belonging to his family he was received with rapture, and the people of London came out to meet him, headed by the clergy, with addresses of congratulation and offers of assistance. But he did not make much delay in the metropolis: all was evidently his own there. He therefore made a rapid march after his uncle, to prevent his union with the king's forces, should he arrive, and he came up with him at Berkeley. After a friendly message from Lancaster, York met him in the castle church, and the result of their conference was that York joined his forces to those of Lancaster. Probably he might believe that Lancaster sought only his just demand of the enjoyment of his hereditary estates, which York had already avowed that he would aid him in. But from that moment the cause of Richard was betrayed, and his doom was sealed. York, on his authority as the king's lieutenant, ordered Sir Peter Courtenay, the governor of Bristol Castle, to open its gates; Sir Peter, protesting that he knew no authority but the king's, yet submitted to the commands of York as regent. The next morning, the three late members of the council and farmers of the taxes, the Earl of Wiltshire, Bussy, and Green, were brought out and executed without any trial. The people had clamoured loudly for their blood, and were delighted at their deaths. The Duke of York took up his quarters at Bristol, and Lancaster, who must have had full confidence in the adhesion of his uncle, went on to Chester, where the people were most favourable to the king, in order to secure the city.

Meanwhile Richard, having received this astounding news, prepared to pass over with his army. From this resolution the Duke of

Albemarle, who played constantly into the hands of the queen's enemies, used every endeavour to persuade him. At length it was determined that the Earl of Salisbury should sail with his own retainers, only 100 men, and endeavour to raise the inhabitants of Wales, Richard promising to follow in a week.

THE TOWER OF LONDON: THE WHITE TOWER.

Salisbury was successful. The men of both Wales and Cheshire flocked to the king's standard, and the earl looked impatiently for the king's arrival. But no Richard appeared; and it was not till nearly three weeks from Salisbury's setting out that Richard came, with the Dukes of Albemarle, Exeter, and Surrey, the Earl of Worcester, the Bishops of London, Lincoln, and Carlisle—plenty of noblemen but hardly any soldiers.

Scarcely had they landed, when the most general disaffection showed itself. The news of the Duke of York having joined Lancaster was fatal; and Richard, looking out of his window on the second morning after his arrival at Milford Haven, saw that his army had vanished. A council was instantly held in the greatest consternation. Some counselled the king to retire to his French provinces; but his evil genius, the Duke of Exeter, the quondam murderer, John Holland, strongly urged him to hasten on to Conway, where the Earl of Salisbury lay. If they could not make a stand there, they could still put out to sea for Guienne. This advice prevailed; but such was the confused state of the royal councils that, instead of advancing there in a small but compact body, the king, disguised as a Franciscan friar, stole out of the camp at midnight, and, accompanied by his two half-brothers, Exeter and Surrey, the Earl of Gloucester, the Bishop of Carlisle, and a few other attendants, made their way towards Conway. As soon as their departure was known, the military chest was plundered, and Albemarle, Worcester, and most of the leaders, hastened to Lancaster, the rest dispersing to their own counties as best they might, insulted and robbed on their way by the Welsh.

Still more overwhelming news met the fugitive king on reaching Conway. Instead of a fine army, there lay Salisbury with only 100 men, and destitute of all provisions. While Richard had delayed his coming, adverse influences had been brought to bear on Salisbury's host; disheartening rumours were circulated amongst the troops, and, in spite of Salisbury's tears and entreaties, they rapidly dispersed.

In this deplorable situation the mind of the king seems to have lost all its wonted courage. He sent his two half-brothers, the Dukes of Surrey and Exeter, to his haughty rival to ask what were his intentions. They could very easily be divined. Richard was wholly in his power, and it was not in the nature of Lancaster to let pass so tempting an opportunity of seizing a crown. While the two emissaries went on their mission, the king and Salisbury examined the castles of Beaumaris and Carnarvon, but, finding only bare walls, they returned dejected to Conway. Meantime Surrey and Exeter were admitted to the presence of Lancaster at Chester, who at once detained them as prisoners. Here was already the traitor Albemarle, who was so gay that he could afford to taunt the fallen kinsmen of the king.

CONWAY CASTLE.

Lancaster having carefully informed himself of the retreat of the king, and that he had a considerable treasure deposited in the strong castle of Holt, immediately despatched a body of troops to capture the money, and another of 400 men-at-arms and 1,000 archers, under the Duke of Northumberland, to secure the king. Northumberland marched into Flint, and thence to Rhuddlan Castle, and about five miles beyond the latter place left his detachment concealed behind a rock. He then rode forward with only four attendants to Conway, where he was readily admitted to the presence of the king, who was in the highest anxiety regarding his brothers and the fate of their mission. The duke replied that his brothers were quite well at Chester, and that he was himself despatched with a letter to his Grace by the Duke of Exeter. In the letter Exeter was instructed to say that Richard might put full confidence in the offers made by Northumberland. These were that the said dukes, Exeter and Surrey, the Earl of Salisbury, the Bishop of Carlisle, and Maudelin, the king's chaplain, should take their trials for having advised the murder of Gloucester; that Lancaster should be made justiciary of the kingdom, as his ancestors had been before him; and, these terms being conceded, the duke would wait on the king at Flint, to implore pardon, and accompany him to London.

Richard, after consulting his friends, consented to the terms, but secretly assured his adherents implicated that he would stand by them steadfastly on their trial, and would take the first opportunity to be avenged on his and their enemies; saying he would flay some of them alive if he could, and that all the gold on earth should not induce him to spare them. He insisted on Northumberland swearing on behalf of Lancaster to the strict observance of the articles, and, "like Judas," says the writer of the account, in the *Archæologia*, which we are following, "he perjured himself on the body of our Lord"—that is he swore on the host.

Northumberland set out, Richard reminding him of his oath, and telling him he relied upon him. He soon followed with a small company of friends and servants. On coming to a turn of the road, Richard exclaimed, "God of Paradise, assist me! I am betrayed! Do you not see pennons and banners in the valley?" Northumberland with eleven others just then came up, and pretended to be ignorant of any armed force near. "Earl of Northumberland!" said Richard, "if I thought you capable of betraying me, it is not too late to return!"

"You cannot return," said Northumberland, seizing Richard's bridle; "I have promised to conduct you to the Duke of Lancaster." A body of lancers and archers came hastening up, and Richard, seeing all hope of escape gone by, exclaimed, "May the God on whom you laid your hand reward you and your accomplices at the last day!"

They reached Flint Castle that evening, where Richard, when left alone with his friends, vented the bitterness of his regret that he had repeatedly spared Lancaster, when he so carefully destroyed other and far less dangerous men. "Fool that I was!" he exclaimed; "thrice did I save the life of this Henry of Lancaster. Once my dear uncle, his father, on whom the Lord have mercy, would have put him to death for his treason and villainy. God of Paradise! I rode all night to save him, and his father delivered him to me to do with him as I pleased. How true is the saying that we have no greater enemy than the man whom we have preserved from the gallows! Another time he drew his sword on me, in the chamber of the queen, on whom God have mercy! He was also the accomplice of the Duke of Gloucester and the Earl of Arundel; he consented to my murder, to that of his father, and of all my council. By St. John, I forgave him all; nor would I believe his father, who more than once pronounced him deserving of death."

The next morning the fallen king, after a sleepless night, ascended the tower of the castle, and looked out anxiously for the approach of Lancaster, who had agreed to meet him there; and anon he saw him coming at the head of 80,000 men. This vast army came winding along the strand to the castle, which it surrounded, and Richard beheld himself a captive in the midst of his own subjects. At this sight, and the reflections it occasioned, the once arbitrary monarch shuddered, and bewailed his fate. He cursed Northumberland in impotent rage, but was soon called to meet Archbishop Arundel, himself a rebel returned, without asking leave, from banishment, the traitor Duke of Albemarle, and the Earl of Worcester. They knelt in pretended homage, and Richard held a long conversation with Arundel. When they were gone, Richard again ascended to the tower, gazed on the great host of his revolted subjects, and feeling a dire foreboding of his fate, said, "Good Lord God! I commend myself into Thy holy keeping, and cry Thee mercy that Thou wouldst pardon all my sins. If they put me to death, I will take it patiently, as Thou didst for us all."

At dinner there were only his few remaining adherents, and since they were all companions in misfortune, Richard would insist on their sitting down with him. While at their meal persons unknown came into the hall, and insulted and menaced him; and no sooner did he rise than he was summoned into the court to meet Lancaster.

The duke advanced to the king, clad in

complete armour, but without helmet, and, bending his knee, did obeisance with his cap in his hand. "Fair cousin of Lancaster," said Richard, uncovering, "you are right welcome." "My lord," replied Lancaster, "I am come somewhat before my time, but I will show you the reason. Your people complain that for the space of twenty or two-and-twenty years you have ruled them rigorously; but, if it please God, I will help you to rule them better." The humbled monarch replied, "Fair cousin, since it pleaseth you, it pleaseth us well."

The king's horses were ordered, and they set forward at once for Chester, amid a flourish of trumpets, Richard and the Earl of Salisbury riding on tired and wretched animals. The duke came behind. At Chester, after issuing writs in the king's name for a meeting of Parliament, Lancaster dismissed a great part of his army, and set out for London. At Lichfield Richard slipped unperceived out of his window, but was re-taken in the court, and was ever afterwards strictly guarded. On arriving at London, Richard was sent to Westminster, and thence to the Tower, while the hypocritical Lancaster went in solemn state to St. Paul's, and pretended to weep awhile at the tomb of his father, while in his heart he was congratulating himself on his successful treason. We have two conflicting statements of the manner of Richard's entrance into London. Froissart says that he was conducted secretly to the Tower for fear of the Londoners, who had a great hatred of him; but other accounts accord with that of Shakespeare, copied, no doubt, from the chronicles, which make Lancaster conduct him thither in triumph.

Parliament met on the 29th of September to consider of the course to be adopted: in other words, to carry out the will of Lancaster, and depose Richard. It was clear that Richard had entirely lost the affections of the people. They would never again receive him. His utter want of regard for them; his continual exactions to waste their means on unworthy favourites; the contempt he had all along expressed for the people, and his severe treatment of them; his breach of all his oaths as a king; his attempts to make himself absolute, and to rule by a junto, had made him disliked and despised through the whole realm, but especially in the metropolis. It is equally true that Lancaster was their favourite, and that they would willingly accept him as king; and had he been content to accept the crown as the popular gift, he would have had the highest possible title to it, far beyond any hereditary plea. But Lancaster disdained that only valid ground of right, and determined to claim it by descent. Than this there could be nothing more palpably untenable, for the Earl of March, the grandson of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, the third son of Edward III., was the true heir.

As soon as Lancaster allowed it to be known that he did not really content himself with being the reformer of the State, but aspired to the crown, some of his chief supporters fell away; and amongst them the Earl of Northumberland, who had been made to assure Richard of his just treatment. This was a main reason for Lancaster dismissing a large part of his army at Chester, including the followers of Northumberland.

The remaining transactions of this reign come to us chiefly through the rolls of Parliament, penned under the direct influence of Lancaster, and, therefore, are probably coloured as much as possible to favour his own views, and cover his notorious usurpation. A deputation of prelates, barons, knights, and lawyers waited on Richard in the Tower, and received from him his resignation, which he was then said to have promised at Conway, but which we know was not the fact. He was also in that document, signed by him and presented by the deputies to Parliament, made to name, by his own preference, Lancaster as his successor. Of course, all this he was obliged to say.

The next day this act of resignation was read in full Parliament, and there unanimously accepted, and received by the people with shouts of applause. If Richard had thus voluntarily abdicated, there could be no necessity for what immediately followed—a series of thirty-three articles of impeachment in order to his deposition. The chief charges contained in these were his violation of his coronation oath, his murder of the Duke of Gloucester, and his despotic and unconstitutional conduct. Of course, there was no opposition; but Merks, the Bishop of Carlisle, who had remained faithful to Richard, and continued with him to the last, stood boldly forward, claimed for him the right to be confronted with his accusers, and urged that Parliament should have the opportunity of judging whether his resignation were voluntary or not. Nothing could be more reasonable, but nothing more inconvenient where all was settled beforehand to one end; and the only answer which the high-minded prelate received was his immediate arrest by Lancaster, and consignment to the Abbey of St. Albans.

Richard was then formally deposed, with an acrimony of accusation which, to say the least, if his resignation had been, as asserted, voluntary in favour of Lancaster, was as ungracious as it was uncalled for. The chief justice, Sir William Thirning, was deputed to notify this decision of Parliament to the captive.

Lancaster, who had taken his seat during these proceedings near the throne, then rising, and crossing himself on the forehead and breast, pronounced the following words:—"In the name of Fadher, Son, and Holy Ghost, I, Henry of Lancaster, challenge this rewme of Ynglonde and the crowne, with all the members and appurtenances, als I that am descendit be ryght lyne of the blode, cumyng fra the gude lord King Henry Thirde, and throghe that ryght that God of His grace has sent me, with help of my kyn and of my frendes to recover it; the whiche rewme was in poynt to be ondone for defaut of governance, and undoying of the gude lawes."

This speech was one of those which have a sound of reason to the ear, but will not bear a moment's examination. True, he was descended from Henry III., like Edward III. and Richard, but not in the true line—that being, as we have stated, the line of Lionel, and Henry being now not only the usurper of Richard's throne, but of the Earl of March's reversion.

But the pretence was enough, and more than enough, for all who heard it. They knew it was empty sound, and the real reasons for assent lay in Lancaster's will, backed by a powerful army and a willing people.

Henry, as proof of Richard's having resigned his rights into his hands, produced the ring and seal. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Arundel, his late fellow-exile, now took him by the hand, and led him to the throne. He knelt for a short time on the steps in prayer, or affected prayer; for Lancaster, amid all his grasping at his neighbour's goods, was especially careful to do outward homage to the great Being who had said, "Thou shalt not covet." On rising, the two archbishops placed him on the throne; and, as soon as the acclamations ceased, the primate made a short sermon, choosing his text, with the finished tact of a priestly courtier, from 1 Samuel ix. 17:—"Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! this same shall reign over my people;" and the sermon was worthy of the text.

Thus ended the reign of Richard II.; and, as with it ended also the authority of Parliament and the ministers of the Crown, Lancaster immediately summoned the Parliament to meet again in six days, appointed new officers, and, having received their oaths, retired to the royal palace.

The history of the progress of Parliamentary power in this reign is most important. We find Parliament at various times asserting its authority, calling on the Crown to reform its household, its courts of law, to restrain its expenditure, and dismiss its servants. By its means the Duke of Gloucester obtained his commission to regulate the administration, and to impeach the prime minister, De la Pole, the Earl of Suffolk; and though, during the latter years of his reign, Parliament, as in our time, became corrupt and subservient, yet the people, assuming the exercise of those powers which their delegates had basely surrendered, punished and deposed the monarch whom they could not reform.

Richard was dethroned in the twenty-third year of his reign, and the thirty-fourth of his age. We may anticipate the events related at greater length in subsequent pages (see Chapter XXXIV.) to briefly sketch the fate of the deposed king. Henry IV. submitted to the lords the question what should be done with the late monarch, whose life, he declared, he was at all events resolved to preserve. The lords recommended perpetual confinement in some castle, where none of his former adherents could obtain access to him. This advice was acted upon, and probably was first suggested by Henry. Richard disappeared, and no one knew anything of his place of detention. The King of France threatened war on behalf of the rights of his daughter, Isabella, and his son-in-law, the deposed king. To avert this storm Henry proposed to make various alliances between the two royal families, including the marriage of the Prince of Wales to a daughter of Charles. But the King of France rejected the proposal, declaring that he knew no King of England but Richard. The French king, however, received intelligence that Richard was dead, and therefore he avowedly ceased to prosecute his claims, but confined himself to those of his daughter, demanding that she should be restored to him, with her jewels and her dowry, according to the marriage settlement. Charles afterwards consented to receive her with her jewels only, counter claims being set up against the dowry.

From the moment, however, that the public statement of Richard's death was made by the King of France, the nation became inquisitive, and it was not long before the dead body of the deposed monarch was brought up from Pontefract Castle, and shown publicly in St. Paul's for two days, where 20,000 people are said to have gone to see it. Only the face was uncovered, and that was wonderfully emaciated. Various were the rumours of the mode of his death on all these occasions, but, as in the case of Richard's victim, the Duke of Gloucester, nothing certain ever transpired. One story was that Sir Piers Exton, with seven other assassins, entered his cell to despatch him, when Richard, aware of their purpose, snatched an axe from one of them, and felled him and several of his fellows to the earth; but that Exton, getting behind him, prostrated him with one blow, and then slew him. Another story was that he starved himself to death; and there were not wanting rumours that he had escaped, and lived many years in the guise of an ordinary man. One thing is quite certain; that the so-called Richard, who, as we shall see, was a considerable source of anxiety to the new king, can have been nothing but an arrant impostor. But Henry of Lancaster may be safely trusted to secure his dangerous captive. The features of Richard were too well known to thousands in London to be mistaken for those of the priest Maudelin, whose body, it was pretended, had been substituted for Richard's. There can be no doubt but that he died a secret and violent death; the mode of that death must for ever remain a mystery. But the evidence would seem to incline to the conclusion that he was starved to death by his keepers.

ARREST OF KING RICHARD. (*See p.* 482.)

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

Power of the Church—Ecclesiastical Legislation—Rapacity of the Papacy—Resistance of the Clergy—The Bull "Clericis Laicos"—Contests between the Civil and Ecclesiastical Power—The Scottish Church—Literature. Science, and Art—State of Learning—The Nominalists and Realists—Medicine—The Universities—Men of Learning and Science—Roger Bacon and his Contemporaries—Historians—Growth of the English Language—Poetry—Architecture—The Early Decorated Style and its Characteristics—Domestic Buildings—Sculpture and Painting—Music—Commerce, Coinage, and Shipping—Manners, Customs, Dress, and Diversions.

Between the reign of John and the termination of that of Richard II. a striking change had taken place in the power of the Church in England. From the zenith of that marvellous dominion over the kingdoms of this world, such as no church or religion had yet exercised in the annals of mankind, it had begun sensibly to wane. From that extraordinary spectacle when, at Courcy, on the Loire, in 1162, the two greatest kings of Christendom, those of England and France, were seen holding the stirrups of the servant of servants, Alexander III., and leading his horse by the reins, to the day when John, just half a century afterwards, laid the crown of this fair empire at the feet of the Pope, "and became a servant unto tribute," everything had seemed to root the Papacy deeper into the heart of the world. Kings, nobles, and people bowed down to it, and received its foot on their necks with profound humility, only occasionally evincing a slight wincing under its exactions. At that period the Church of Rome had reached the summit of its glory; but before the era at which we have now arrived, it had received a stern warning that its days in England were numbered as the established hierarchy. So long as the people were kept ignorant of the Bible, the opposition of king or peer mattered little to it; but the people withdrew their allegiance, and it fell rapidly.

The Pope, who strenuously supported John against his barons, was equally friendly to his infant son, Henry III. Archbishop Langton, now in the ascendant, held a synod at Oxford in 1222, in which fifty canons were passed, some of which let in a curious light on the internal condition of the Church. The twenty-eighth canon forbids the keeping of concubines by the clergy openly in their houses, or visiting them openly, as they did, to the great scandal of religion. In 1237 a council was held at London by Otho, the Papal legate, in which were passed what were afterwards known as the "Constitutions of Otho." The fifteenth and sixteenth canons of this constitution were aimed at the same practices, and at clandestine marriages of the priests, which were declared to be very common.

But the main object of the Church was to collect all the English moneys, and in this pursuit there was no slackness. A cardinal-legate generally resided in this country, whose chief function this was. During Otho's abode here, 300 Italians came over, and were installed in lucrative livings in the churches and abbeys. In pursuance of Magna Charta, that the Church should be free, it became the only free thing in the kingdom; every class of men were its vassals, and England was one huge sponge which the Italian pontiff squeezed vigorously. The barons in 1245 became so exasperated that they sent orders to the wardens of the sea-ports to seize all persons bringing bulls or mandates from Rome. The legate remonstrated, and the barons then told the king that the Church preferments alone held by Italians in England, independent of other exactions, amounted to 60,000 marks per annum, a greater sum than the revenues of the Crown. The barons went further; they sent an embassy to the Papal council of Lyons, where the Pope was presiding in person, when they declared, "We can no longer with any patience bear these oppressions. They are as detestable to God and man as they are intolerable to us; and, by the grace of God, we will no longer endure them."

But, so far from relaxing his hold, the Pope soon after sent an order demanding the half of all revenues of the non-resident clergy, and a third of those of the resident ones. This outrageous attempt roused the English clergy to determined resistance, and the rapacious Pope was defeated. Amongst the most patriotic of the English prelates was the celebrated Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln. Innocent IV., one of the most imperious pontiffs that ever filled the Papal chair, had sent him a bull containing a clause which created a wonderful ferment in the Church and the public mind, commencing with the words *Non* *obstante,* which meant, notwithstanding all that the English clergy had to advance, the holy father was determined to have his will, and he commanded the venerable bishop to bestow a benefice upon an infant. The honest bishop tore up the bull, and wrote to the Pope, declaring that the conduct of the see of Rome "shook the very foundations of faith and security amongst mankind," and that to put an infant into a living would be next to the sins of Lucifer and of Antichrist, was in direct opposition to the precepts of Christ, and would be the destruction of souls, by depriving them of the benefits of the pastoral office. He refused to comply, and said plainly that the sins of those who attempted such a thing rose as high as their office.

The astonished Pope was seized with a furious passion on receiving this epistle, and swore by St. Peter and St. Paul that he would utterly confound that old, impertinent, deaf, doting fellow, and make him the astonishment of the world. "What!" he exclaimed, "is not England our possession, and its king our vassal, or rather our slave?"

The resistance of the English clergy only inflamed the cupidity and despotism of the pontiffs. Boniface, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was the servile tool of Rome, and after him Kilwardby, Peckham, and Winchelsey carried things with a high hand. At various synods and councils, held at Merton, Lambeth, London, Reading, and other places, they passed canons, which went to give the Church unlimited power over everything and everybody. The Church was to appoint to all livings and dignities; no layman was to imprison a clergyman; the Church was to enjoy peaceably all pious legacies and donations. The barons wrote to the Pope, remonstrating and complaining against the immorality of the clergy. The Pope replied that he did not suppose the English clergy were any more licentious than they had always been. The possessions of the Church went on growing to such an extent, from the arts of the priests and superstition of the wealthy, that they are said to have amounted to three-fourths of the property of the whole kingdom, and threatened to swallow up all its lands. To put a stop to this fearful condition of things, Edward I. passed his famous statute of mortmain in 1279, and arrested the progress, for a considerable time, of the Papal avarice.

But, perhaps, the finest draught of golden fishes which the imperial representative of Peter of Galilee ever made in England was twenty-five years before the passing of this Act, when he had induced Henry III. to nominate his son Edmund to the fatal crown of Naples, and, on pretence of supporting his claim, the Pope drew from England, within a few years, no less a sum than 950,000 marks, equal in value and purchasable power to £12,000,000 sterling of our present money.

Boniface VIII., famous in his day as the most haughty and uncompromising of the Popes, issued, as we have seen, a bull, known by the name of *Clericis Laicos,* prohibiting all princes, in all countries from levying taxes on the clergy without his consent. Winchelsey, Archbishop of Canterbury, produced this bull, and forbade Edward I. to touch the patrimony of the Church. But Edward was a monarch of the true British breed, and soon proved more than a match for the archbishop and his Roman master. He held a Parliament at Edmondsbury in 1296, and demanded a fifth of the movables of the clergy. They refused. Edward gave them till the next Parliament, in January, 1297, to consider of it, when, still refusing, and supposing themselves victorious, the king coolly told them that as they refused to contribute to the support of the State, they should enjoy no protection from the State. He forthwith outlawed them in a body, and ordered all the sheriffs in England "to seize all the lay fees of the clergy, as well secular as regular, with all their goods and chattels, and retain them till they had further orders from him." He gave orders to all the judges, also, "to do every man justice against the clergy, but to do them justice against no man."

This was a condition of things which they had never expected; no monarch had ever dreamt of, or had dared to attempt, such a measure. It came like a thunderclap upon the clergy. They found themselves insulted, abused, and plundered on every side. The archbishop himself, the author of all this mischief, was stripped of everything, and, when on the verge of starvation, was glad to submit and pay his fifth to recover the rest of his property.

The power of the Popedom had thus been brought into collision with the royal prerogative, and the issue was most damaging to the Papal prestige all over the world. But Winchelsey, having regained his possessions, was too indignant to remain quiet. He held a second synod at Merton, and denounced the utmost terrors of the Church against all sacrilegious invaders of the Church property, and would not rest till Edward obtained his suspension from the next Pope, Clement V., and expelled him the kingdom.

These contests betwixt the civil and ecclesiastical power in England continued through the whole period we are reviewing, that is, from 1307 to 1399, or from the commencement of the reign of Edward II. to the end of that of Richard II. To increase the influence of Rome there had arrived two new orders of friars, the Franciscan and Dominican, in the reign of Henry III. The Franciscans appeared in England in 1216, and the Dominicans in 1217. At first they did good work among the poor, but they soon grew corrupt. To prevent the Pope from thrusting foreigners into English prelacies and benefices, Edward III. passed a second statute of Provisors, and followed it by the statute of Præmunire, ordering the confiscation of the property and the imprisonment of the person of every one who should carry any pleas out of the kingdom, as well as of the procurators of such person. This was renewed in 1393 with additional severity by Richard II., when it was made to include all who brought into the kingdom any Papal bull, excommunication, or anything of the kind.

COSTUME OF BISHOP OF THE 14TH CENTURY.

Eight years prior to this Wycliffe died. His doctrines were rapidly spreading; the reformers, under the name of Lollards, were becoming numerous; the Papal hierarchy was proportionally alarmed, and Arundel, the Archbishop of York, became their most active enemy. But before he could mature his designs against them, he was involved in the prosecution of the adherents of the Duke of Gloucester for procuring a commission to control the king, for which his brother, the Earl of Arundel, was beheaded, and he himself banished. The dawn of the Reformation already reddened in the east, but the day was yet far off.

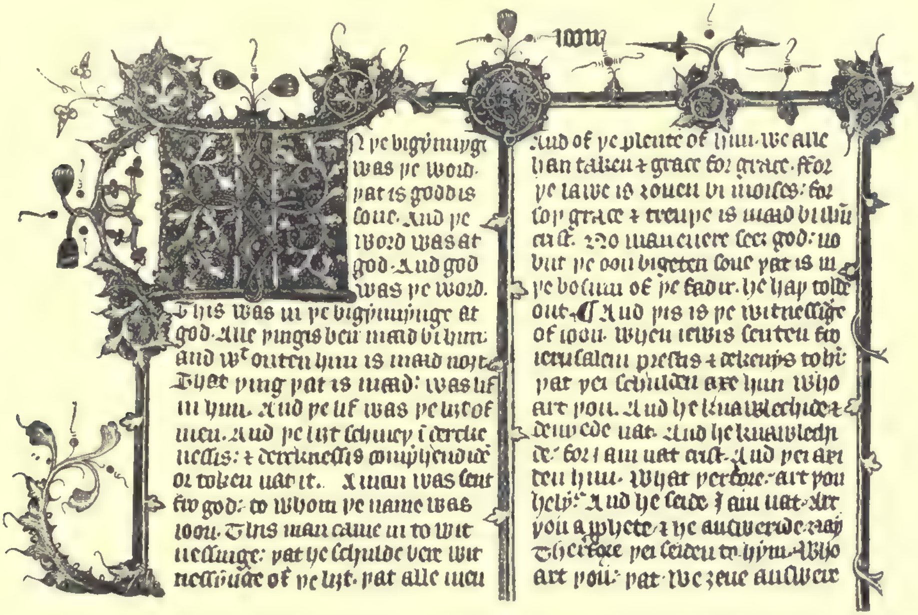
During the fourteenth century, the leading men of the Church in Scotland signalised themselves rather in the patriotic defence of their country against the English than in theological matters. Amongst the most distinguished of these were Lambeton, of St. Andrews; Wishart, of Glasgow; Landells, who was Bishop of St. Andrews from 1341 to 1385, forty-four years; and Robert Trail, Primate of Scotland, who built the castle of St. Andrews, and died in 1401, leaving a great name for strict discipline and wisdom. It is singular that, during this period, the doctrines of Wycliffe, which had made such ferment in England, appear to have excited little or no attention in Scotland.

During the period now under review—the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries—the language of the learned was still Latin, and the circle of education included little more than the Trivium and Quadrivium of the former age, that is, the course of three sciences—grammar, rhetoric, and logic; and the course of four—music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. The grammar was almost exclusively confined to the Latin, for Roger Bacon says that there were not more than three or four persons in his time that knew anything of Greek or the Oriental languages; nay, so gross was the ignorance of the students of the time of the common elementary forms of Latin itself, that Kilwardby, Archbishop of Canterbury, on a visit to Oxford in 1276, upbraided the students with such corruptions as these:—"Ego currit;" "tu currit;" "currens est ego," &c.

When grammar was so defective, the rhetoric taught could not be very profound. The mendicant friars seem to have cultivated it with the greatest assiduity, as necessary to give effect to their harangues, and the Provincial of the Augustinians, in the fourteenth century, was greatly admired for the eloquence of his preaching.

But logic was the all-absorbing study of the time. The clergy who had attended the Crusaders had brought back from the East a knowledge of Aristotle, through Latin translations and the commentaries of his Arabian admirers. His logic was now applied not only to such metaphysics as were taught, but also to theology. Hence arose the School divinity, in which the doctrines taught by the Church were endeavoured to be made conformable to the Aristotelian modes of reasoning, and to be defended by it. If we are to judge of the logic of this period by what remains of it, we should say it was the art of disputing without meaning or object; of perplexing the plainest truths, and giving an air of plausibility to the grossest absurdities. As, for instance, it was argued with the utmost earnestness that "two contrary propositions might be both true." At this time there were several thousand students at Oxford, and Hume very reasonably asks, what were these young men all about? Studying bad logic and worse metaphysics.

The metaphysics of those days were almost engrossed by the great controversy of the Nominalists and the Realists; the question—agitated with all the vehemence of a matter of life or death—being whether general ideas were realities, or only the particular ideas of things were real. The Nominalists declared that a general idea, derived from comparing a great number of individual facts, was no reality, but a mere idea or name; the Realists contended that these general ideas were as absolute actualities as the individual ones on which they were based. Rocelin of Compiègne revived this old question at the end of the eleventh century, and thus became the head of the Schoolmen of those ages; but William of Ockham, in the fourteenth century, again revived this extraordinary question with all its ancient vehemence, his partisans acquiring the name of Ockhamists. Ockham was a Nominalist, and, says an old historian, he and his party "waged a fierce war against another sect of schoolmen, called Realists, about certain metaphysical subtleties which neither of them understood."



In þe bigynnynge
was þe word.
þat is goddis
sone. And þe
word was at
god. And god
was þe word.
This was in þe bigynnynge at
god. Alle þingis ben maad bi him:
and wᵗ outen him is maad noȝt.
That þing þat is maad: was lif
in him. And þe lif was þe liȝt of
men. And þe liȝt schyneþ i derk-
nessis: & derknessis comprehendidē
or token not it. A man was sent
fro god: to whom þe name was
Joon. This man came in to wit-
nessinge: þat he schulde bere wit-
nessinge of þe liȝt. þat alle men

And of þe plente of him we alle
han taken & grace for grace. For
þe lawe is ȝouen bi moises: for
soþ grace & treuþe is maad bi ihū
crist. No man euere seiȝ god: no
but þe oon bigeten sone þat is in
þe bosum of þe fadir. he haþ tolde
out. ¶ And þis is þe witnessinge
of Joon. whan iewis senten fro
ierusalem prestis & dekenys to hī:
þat þei schulden axe him who
art þou. And he knowlechide &
denyede not. And he knowleched-
de: for I am not crist. And þei ax-
eden him. What þerfore: art þou
helye? And he seide I am not. Art
þou a prophete & he answeride nay.
Therfore þei seiden to him. Who
art þou: þat we ȝeue answere

FACSIMILE OF PORTION OF THE FIRST CHAPTER OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL IN THE WYCLIFFE BIBLE IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

Moral philosophy could not be much more rationally taught when metaphysics and logic were so fantastic. Many systems of moral philosophy were taught by the Schoolmen, abounding in endless subtle distinctions and divisions of virtues and vices, and a host of questions in each of these divisions. By the logic, metaphysics.

and moral philosophy of the Schoolmen combined, the most preposterous doctrines were often taught. For instance, a learned divine taught this proposition in the University of Paris in 1300:—"It may be lawful to steal, and the theft can be pleasing to God. Suppose a young gentleman of good family meets with a very learned professor [meaning himself], who is able in a short time to teach him all the speculative sciences, but will not do it for less than £100, which the young gentleman cannot procure but by theft; in that case theft is lawful—which is thus proved: Whatever is pleasing to God is lawful. It is pleasing to God that a young gentleman learn all the sciences, but he cannot do this without theft; therefore theft is lawful, and pleasing to God."

It was high time that something tangible and substantial should come to the rescue of the human mind from this destructive cobwebbery of metaphysics; and the first thing which did this was the study of the canon law. The civil and the canon laws not only gave their students lucrative employment as pleaders, but were the road to advancement in the Church. The clergy in those ages were not only almost the only lawyers, but also the doctors, though some of the laity now entered the profession as a distinct branch. "The civil and canon laws," says Robert Holcot, a writer of that time, "are in our days so exceedingly profitable, procuring riches and honours, that almost the whole multitude of scholars apply to the study of them."

What was the real knowledge of the science of Medicine at this period we may learn from the great medical work of John Gaddesden, who was educated at Merton College, Oxford, and declared to be the grand luminary of physic in the fourteenth century. "He wrote," says Leland, "a large and learned work on medicine, to which, on account of its excellences, was given the illustrious title of the 'Medical Rose.' This is a recipe in the 'Illustrious Medical Rose' of Gaddesden for the cure of small-pox:—'After this (the appearance of the eruption), cause the whole body of your patient to be wrapped in red scarlet cloth, or in any other red cloth, and command everything about the bed to be made red. This is an excellent cure. It was in this manner I treated the son of the noble King of England, when he had the small-pox, and I cured him without leaving any marks.'" The royal patient thus treated must have been Edward III., or his brother, Prince John of Eltham.

To cure epilepsy, Gaddesden orders the patient "and his parents" to "fast three days and then go to church. The patient must first confess, he must have mass on Friday and Saturday, and then on Sunday the priest must read over the patient's head the Gospel for September, in the time of vintage, after the feast of the Holy Cross. After this the priest shall write out this portion of the Gospel reverently, and bind it about the patient's neck, and he shall be cured."

That is a sample of the practice of medicine from the great work of the chief physician of the age. As to the Surgery of the time, it is thus described by Guy de Cauliac, in his "System of Surgery," published in Paris in 1363:—"The practitioners in surgery are divided into five sects. The first follow Roger and Roland, and the four masters, and apply poultices to all wounds and abscesses. The second follow Brunus and Theodoric, and in the same cases use wine only. The third follow Saliceto and Lanfranc, and treat wounds with ointments and soft plasters. The fourth are chiefly Germans, who attend the armies, and promiscuously use potions, oil, and wool. The fifth are old women and ignorant people, who have recourse to the saints in all cases."

It was high time that a man like Roger Bacon should appear, and teach men to come out of all this jugglery and mere fancy-work both in science and philosophy, and put everything to the test of experiment—a mode of philosophising, however, which made little progress till the appearance, three centuries later, of another Bacon, the great Verulam. For the knowledge of geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and chemistry—or rather astrology and alchemy—as taught at that period, we may refer to our notice of Bacon amongst the great men of the era.

But the number of schools and colleges which were erected during this period is a striking proof that the spirit of inquiry and the love of knowledge were taking rapid and deep root in the nation. In Oxford alone seven colleges were founded during this period. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE was founded by William, Archdeacon of Durham, who died in 1249, and bequeathed 310 marks to provide for four Masters of Arts, a foundation which developed into "University College." BALLIOL COLLEGE was founded by John Balliol, the father of John, the King of Scotland, about 1268, and completed by the Lady Devorguilla, his widow. MERTON COLLEGE was founded by Walter Merton, Bishop of Rochester, in 1264.

Exeter College was founded by Walter Stapleton, Bishop of Exeter, and Peter de Skelton, a clergyman, in 1314. It was first called Stapleton College. **Oriel College** was founded by Edward II., and his almoner, Adam de Brun, in 1326, and was called the Hall of the Blessed Virgin of Oxford, but derived its permanent name from a fresh endowment by Richard III. **Queen's College** was founded by Robert Eglesfield, chaplain to Philippa, queen of Edward III., and named in her honour because she greatly aided him in establishing it. **New College** was named St. Mary's College by its builder and founder, William of Wykeham, who also built the college at Winchester. It was finished in 1386.

In Cambridge, during this period, were founded nine colleges, namely :—**Peterhouse** was founded by Hugh Balsham, afterwards Bishop of Ely, in 1257. **Michaelhouse** (now extinct), dedicated to St. Michael, was founded and endowed about 1324, by Harvey de Stanton, Chancellor of the Exchequer to Edward II. **University Hall** was founded by Richard Badew, Chancellor of the University, in 1326, but was soon after destroyed by fire. **King's Hall** was built by Edward III., but afterwards united to Trinity College. **Clare Hall** was a restoration of University Hall, by Elizabeth de Clare, Countess of Ulster, and named in honour of her family. **Pembroke College** was built in 1347, by Mary de St. Paul, widow of Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, in memory of her husband, who was killed in a tournament soon after their marriage. She named it the Hall of Valence and Mary. **Trinity Hall** was founded in 1350, by William Bateman, Bishop of Norwich. **Gonville Hall** was founded by Edward Gonville, parson of Terrington and Rushworth, in Norfolk, in 1348; after its restoration by Dr. Caius, in 1558, it was termed Gonville and Caius. **Corpus Christi College** was founded, in 1352, by the united guilds of Corpus Christi and St. Mary, assisted by Henry, Duke of Lancaster.

These were for the most part small and simple establishments at first, but have arrived at their present wealth and magnificence by additional benefactions.

The number of scholars who rushed into these schools at first was something extraordinary; nor were their character and appearance less so. They are described by Anthony Wood as a regular rabble, who were guilty of theft and all kinds of crimes and disorders. He declares that they lived under no discipline nor any masters, but only thrust themselves into the schools at lectures, that they might pass for scholars when they were called to account by the townsmen for any mischief, so as to free them from the jurisdiction of the burghers. At one time, according to Fitz-Ralph, the Archbishop of Armagh, there were no less than 30,000 students—or so-called students—in Oxford alone; but he says that they were again reduced to less than 6,000, so many of them had joined the mendicant friars.

Such was the disorder of the two universities at this time, the violent quarrels, not only between the students and the townspeople, but also between each other, that many of the members of both universities retired to Northampton, and, with the permission of Henry III., commenced a new university there; but the people of Oxford and Cambridge found means to obtain its dissolution from the king. About thirty years afterwards they tried the same experiment at Stamford, but were stopped in the same manner.

London at this time so abounded with schools, that it was called the third university. Edward III. built the college of St. Stephen at Westminster for a college of Divinity, which was dissolved by Henry VIII. Archbishop Bradwardine founded a theological lecture in St. Paul's Church, and John of Gaunt founded a college for divines in St. Paul's Churchyard. There were various schools besides these, but the most remarkable were the great schools of Law, which arose out of the provisions of the Great Charter, which fixed the chief courts of justice at Westminster. Sir John Fortescue, who studied in one of these inns of court, describes them as a great school or university of law, consisting of several colleges. "The situation," he says, "where the students read and study is between Westminster and the City of London. There belong to it ten lesser inns, and sometimes more, which are called the inns of Chancery, in each of which there are a hundred students at least, and in some of them a far greater number not constantly residing." In these the young nobility and gentry of England began to receive some part of their education, so that, with all these colleges of learning and of law, the laity as well as the clergy reaped the benefits of education.

Amongst the theologians of this period none surpass for extent of learning, talent, and eloquence, Robert Grosseteste, or Greathead, Bishop of Lincoln. He was originally a very poor lad; but the Mayor of Lincoln, noticing his quickness of faculty, took him into his house, and put him to school. He studied at Oxford, Cambridge, and Paris, his splendid talents acquiring him many patrons. Bacon, who knew him well, gives this testimony of him:—"Robert Greathead, Bishop of Lincoln, and his friend, Prior Adam de Marisco, are the two most learned men in the world, and excel all the rest of mankind both in divine and human knowledge."

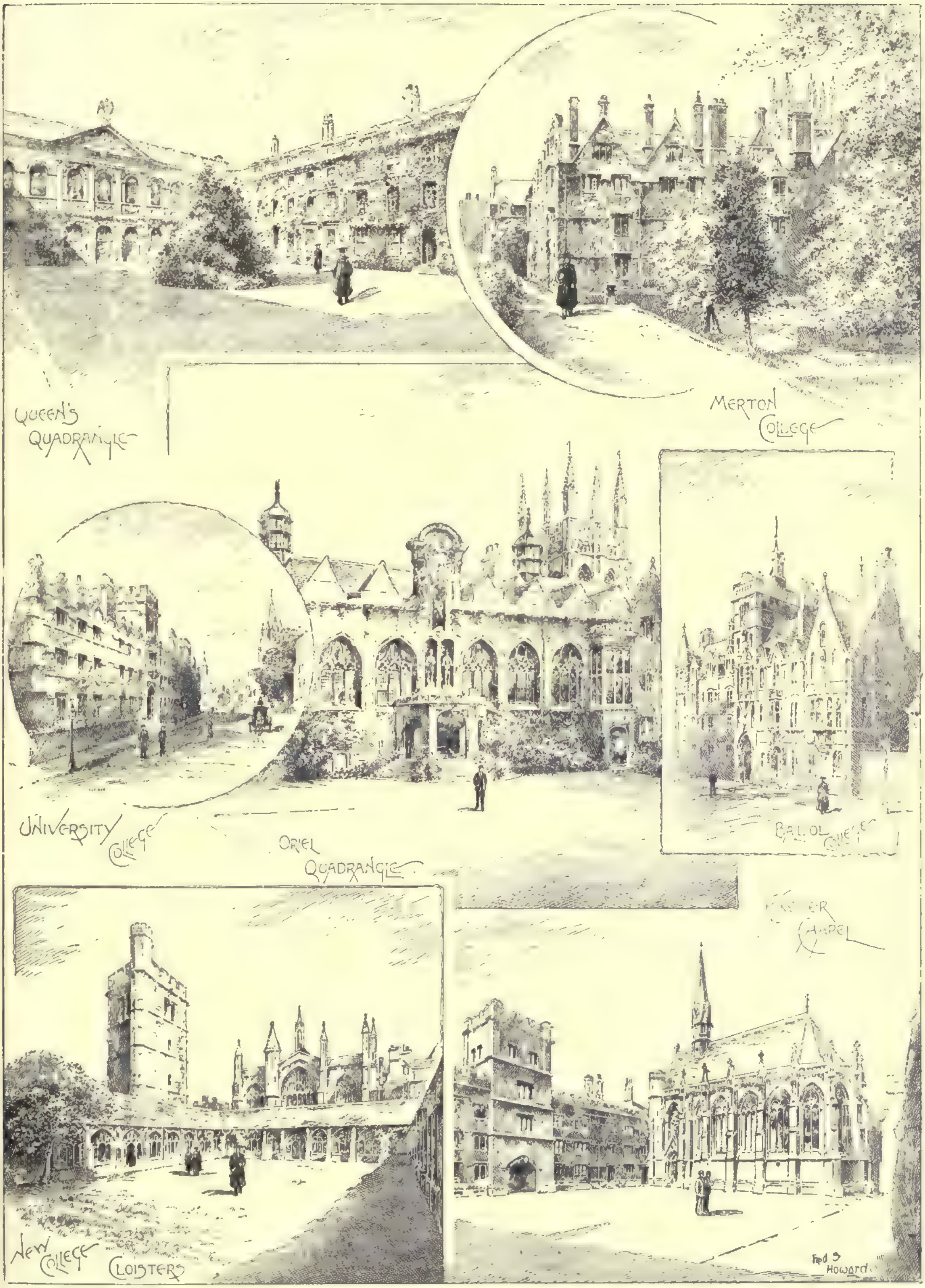
Greathead was one of the very few real Greek scholars of the age, and was equally versed in Hebrew, French, and Latin. But, beyond his learning, which he has embodied in many voluminous works, his noble and independent character stands pre-eminent in those times. We have mentioned his opposition to the Pope inducting mere infants into Church livings; and the caution which the cardinals are reported, by Matthew Paris, to have given the Pope when he threatened to take vengeance on him is remarkable, as indicating their knowledge of the tendency of the age. "Let us not raise a tumult in the Church without necessity, and precipitate that revolt and separation from us which we know must one day take place."

But the man of that time in philosophy was Roger Bacon, as Chaucer was in literature. Bacon was born near Ilchester, and educated at Oxford, and afterwards at Paris. On his return to England, at the age of twenty-six, he again settled at Oxford, and entered the order of Franciscan friars of that city, that he might study at leisure. He soon abandoned the beaten track, and struck out a course of inquiry and experiment for himself. He was not content to study Aristotle alone at second hand, but he made himself master of Greek, and went to the fountain-head of ancient knowledge.

But that did not satisfy him. He sought to make himself acquainted with Nature, the great fountain of all our human knowledge. He declared that if you would know the truth you must seek it by actual inquiry and experiment. In this system of philosophising he preceded Francis Bacon nearly three centuries and a half; but he was before his time, and, therefore, the benefit of his teaching was, to a large extent, lost. His great work, the "Opus Majus," contains the result of his researches; and he states in that work that he had expended £2,000 in twenty years on apparatus and experiments—a sum equal to £30,000 of our money at present. This he had done through the generosity of his friends and patrons, having made a greater amount of discoveries in geometry, astronomy, physics, optics, mechanics, and chemistry, than ever was accomplished by any one man in an equal space of time. In his treatise on optics, "De Scientiâ Perspectivâ," he gives you the mode of constructing spectacles and microscopic lenses. In mechanics, he talks of having ascertained by experiments wonders that we have not yet reached by steam; of a mode of propelling ships so that they should require only one man to guide them, and with a velocity greater than if they were full of sailors. "Chariots," he says, "may be constructed that will move with incredible rapidity, without the help of animals." He speculated and believed in the capability of raising the most wonderful weights by mechanical contrivance, and of walking on the bottom of the sea. But, unfortunately, he has not left us the explicit exposition of these marvels. His system of chemical analysis has, however, been greatly praised by some modern chemists, and it is evident that he was well acquainted with gunpowder. "A little matter," he says, "about the bigness of a man's thumb makes a horrible noise, and produces a dreadful corruscation; and by this a city or an army may be destroyed several ways." He then explains that sulphur, saltpetre, and powdered charcoal are the ingredients of this wonderful explosive substance. Whether Bacon discovered this mixture, or whether he learnt it in his Asiatic reading, is a moot point. At all events, he knew the fact, and in the reign of Edward III. gunpowder came into use in war.

Bacon was the martyr of science. Instead of benefiting by his discoveries, the ignorant monks of his order accused him of necromancy and dealing with the devil. He was kept in close confinement for years, and was not allowed to send his "Opus Majus" to any one except the Pope. After receiving a copy of it, Clement IV. procured him his liberty, but he was very soon imprisoned again by Jerome de Esculo, general of the Franciscan order. He continued in confinement this time eleven or twelve years, and, on coming out, old and broken down by his cruel suffering, he still continued his labours with undiminished ardour till his death about 1294.

A kindred spirit to Bacon was Michael Scott, who was born about the beginning of the thirteenth century at his family seat in Scotland. By his study of astrology and alchemy in common with Bacon and the great inquirers of the time he obtained the reputation of a magician, which has mixed up his name with the wildest popular



THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURY COLLEGES OF OXFORD UNIVERSITY. (*See p.* 491.)

legends and superstitions of Scotland. So strong were the convictions of his countrymen that he was a magician that Dempster assures us many people in Scotland in his time dared not so much as touch his works. Bishop Tanner says, "He was one of the greatest philosophers, physicians, and linguists of his age; and, though his fondness for astrology, alchemy, physiognomy, and chiromancy made people think him a magician, none speaks or writes more respectfully of God and religion than he does." He was deeply read in the Greek and Arabic languages, and, while residing at the court of the Emperor Frederick II., he translated for that prince the works of Aristotle into Latin, to which Bacon attributes the high admiration which those works obtained afterwards in Europe.

Duns Scotus, though supposed to be of Scottish origin, was educated at Oxford, from which seat of learning he went to Paris, to maintain before the university of that city his favourite doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin. He had profoundly studied moral philosophy, mathematics, civil and canon law, and school divinity. No man of his age was so admired and applauded, but his works now sleep, covered with the dust of ages.

William of Ockham was a very learned and eloquent theologian, who maintained the temporal independence of kings, and was supported, against all the efforts of three successive Popes to crush him, by his patron, the Emperor Ludwig of Germany; but on the death of that prince he was compelled to recant. He did not long survive this humiliation, having for many years borne the title of the Singular and Invincible Doctor. During his life appeared Wycliffe, who, under happier auspices, proclaimed the freedom of religion.

The historians of this period, from whom, and from the parliamentary writs and statutes, our history is derived, are chiefly these:—

Matthew Paris is the great writer of the period. Besides a *Historia Minor*, he wrote the important *Chronica Majora*. Under this title, however, is included the work of three or four, all monks of St. Albans, namely, Roger Wendover, Matthew Paris, an unknown writer, and William Rishanger. Matthew Paris's own share comprehends only the period from 1235 to 1259, about twenty-five years. He continues Wendover, and Rishanger continues him. Besides this, he wrote the lives of twenty-three abbots of St. Albans. Wendover's chronicle, "Flores Historiarum," reaches from the Creation to the year 1235, and is divided at the birth of Christ into two halves. Matthew Paris, in copying Wendover, has taken care to infuse here and there his own spirit, which was one of great freedom of remark on kings, priests, popes, and, what is singular, on the usurpations of the Court of Rome itself. Matthew had seen the world and courts, and had picked up a large quantity of amusing anecdotes and curious characteristics of great men. He went as visitor of the Benedictine order to Haco of Norway, and, at the Pope's instance, made a visitation of the monastery of Holm, in that kingdom. He was employed in writing history by Henry III., and even assisted by him in it. He says, "He wrote this almost constantly with the king in his palace, at his table, and in his closet; and that prince guided his pen in writing in the most diligent and condescending manner." No historian who has written of his own times has shown more boldness and independence than Matthew Paris. Though a monk, he did not hesitate to paint the corruptions of a monastic life in the plainest colours, nor to denounce the corruptions of the Church and hierarchy at large with equal honesty. For this he has been assailed, and charged even with interpolating falsehoods by those whom his honest freedom had offended. But Matthew Paris was not only a most accomplished man for that age, but one of the most incorruptible of those who ever associated with kings and pontiffs. He is declared at the same time to have been "famous for the purity, integrity, innocence, and simplicity of his manners."

Matthew of Westminster also wrote "Flowers of History," of which the earlier part is based on Roger of Wendover, but which is a valuable authority for the reigns of John, Henry III., and Edward I.

Thomas Wykes wrote a chronicle extending from the Conquest to 1304. He was a canon in the Abbey of Osney. The latter years of his chronicle, from 1289, are supposed to be by another hand.

Walter Hemingford, a monk of the Abbey of Gisborough, in Yorkshire, wrote a chronicle of about the same period with Wykes, continued by later hands to 1346.

John de Trokelowe and Henry de Blandford who are supposed to have been monks of St. Albans, wrote histories of Edward II., as did also the anonymous monk of Malmesbury.

Bartholomew Cotton, whose work has been published in the Rolls Series, copied other chronicles in his earlier pages; but the reign of Edward I. to the year 1298 is a very valuable contribution to our history.

Robert of Avesbury, who was registrar of the court of the Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote the history of Edward III. to the year 1356. His account is most valuable. He gives us many particulars that appear nowhere else, which, as he had access to the best sources, are undoubtedly correct. They serve to test the accounts of Froissart, who is apt to merge into the romantic. In this work of Avesbury's abound original letters of Edward regarding the attack on Cambray in 1336, and the expedition into Brittany in 1342; besides relations of the circumstances which led to the battle of Creçy by officers and eye-witnesses, and dispatches from the camps of the Earl of Derby and the Black Prince, with similar most interesting and invaluable documents.

Adam of Murimuth wrote the history of Edward II. and the earlier part of that of Edward III. He was engaged much in public affairs as ambassador, both from the clergy to the Pope at Avignon, and from the king to the Court of Rome, as well as afterwards to the King of Sicily on account of Edward's claims in Provence. He saw much and, as professor of civil law, was much engaged in affairs of the Government, but his account is somewhat meagre and dry.

Besides these, we may name Nicholas Trivet, who wrote "Annals," from 1136 to 1307; and Ralph Higden, whose "Polychronicon" ends in 1357, and has been translated into English by John of Trevisa. Robert de Brunne, or Manning, a canon of Brunne, in Lincolnshire, wrote a rhymed chronicle, including versions or appropriations of Ware's old French poem of Brut, and Peter Langtoft's French "Rhymed Cronicall." The latter part, from King Ina to the death of Edward I., has some historic merit. Henry Knighton, a canon of Leicester, is the author of a history from the time of King Edgar to 1395, and of an account of the deposition of Richard II. His work is of great authority in the latter of these reigns. Thomas de la Moor wrote a life of Edward II., and asserts that he had the account of the battle of Bannockburn and Edward's last days from eye-witnesses.

In Scottish history of this period, we have the "Scoticronica" of Sir Thomas Gray of Heton, who was a native of the north of England, being taken prisoner by the Scots. He has left us in his "Cronicall" many particulars of the times of Wallace. Andrew Wyntoun, the author of the "Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland," was living in the long reign of David II., and his rhymed chronicle reaches from the beginning of the world, in the fashion of those times, to the year 1424. He was canon of the priory of St. Andrews. The portion of his chronicle from the beginning of the reign of David II. to the end of Robert II. is supposed to be by another hand. John Fordun's "Scotichronicon" is a regular chronicle of Scotland to the year 1385. This work was continued by Walter Bower, Abbot of St. Icolmkill (Iona), in the fifteenth century.

Besides these, the monastic registers of Mailros (Melrose), ending in 1270; of Margan, ending 1232; of Burton, ending 1262; and Waverley, ending 1291, afford evidence of the history of Scotland and England, and of the literary talent of the two countries at this time.

But it is to the poets of this era that we must look for the chief genius, and the evidences of the progress of literature in the nation. It is a singular fact that, while the Roman Church had continued the use of the Latin language during the Middle Ages, it had neglected, or rather discouraged, the reading of the great Roman and Greek writers, so that the Greek and Roman classical literature became, as it were, extinct. The great classical authors which were not destroyed lay buried in the dust of abbeys and monasteries. So completely were Greek literature and the Greek tongues forgotten, that, as we before stated, we find Bacon declaring that there were not above four men in England who understood Greek, or could pass the fifth proposition of the first book of Euclid—the familiar *pons asinorum*, or bridge of asses. So utterly were the clergy unacquainted with Greek that, on finding a New Testament amongst the books of the Reformers, they declared that it was some new heretical language. But, as knowledge revived, the same men who were the greatest advocates for classical studies and the restoration of the classical writers to public use were those who began also to write in their vernacular tongues; and this was especially the case with Petrarch in Italy.

Latin was the almost universal language of the learned in art, science, and literature still at this period. The works of the chroniclers were written in Latin for the most part; Bacon wrote all his works in Latin. But for some time, in the chief countries of Europe, eminent authors—and especially the poets—had begun to use their native tongues. Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch in Italy had set the example; Froissart had done it in French; and now our great poets in England did the same.

This was a proof that the English language was now travelling up from the common people, and establishing itself amongst all ranks. The Norman nobles and gentry found themselves speaking English, and engrafting on it many of their own terms. Metrical romances and songs had long been circulated amongst the people; they now reached the higher classes. Robert of Gloucester versified the chronicle of Robert of Monmouth; Peter Langtoft, a canon of Bridlington, found his chronicle in French verse translated into English by Robert Manning of Brunne, already mentioned. This was the English of that day:—

"Pers of Langtoft, a chanon,
Schaven in the house of Bridlyngton,
O Frankis style this storie he wrote,
Of Inglis kinges," &c.

About the middle of the fourteenth century William Langland, a secular priest of Oxford, wrote a famous satirical allegory against persons of all professions, called "The Vision of Piers Plowman." This is written in alliterative verse, and its language appears to be of a purposely archaic type. This is precisely what Spenser did in his "Faery Queen," in the reign of Elizabeth; he went backwards in his diction, so that now it is nearly obsolete, while the language of his contemporary, Shakespeare, is still sterling English, and likely to continue so. Who could imagine that these lines were written in the same age as those which we shall place beside them by a contemporary?

"Hunger in hast tho' hint Wastour by the maw,
And wrong him so by the wombe that both his eies watered.
He buffeted the Briton about the chekes
That he loked lyke a lanterne al his life after."

Take now these few lines from John Barbour, of the same period:—

"Ah, freedom is a noble thing!
Freedom makes man to have liking;
Freedom all solace to man gives;
He lives at ease that freely lives.
A noble heart may have none ease,
Nor nought else that may it please
If freedom fail."

Now this was the work, not of an English, but of a Scottish poet, who wrote in English.

John Barbour was born in Aberdeen in 1316, though the date is somewhat uncertain. He became, under David II., Archdeacon of Aberdeen in 1356. He obtained permission of Edward III., through his own sovereign, to study at Oxford, and became famous, not only as a divine and philosopher, but as a poet, only surpassed in that age by Chaucer, and certainly far more purely English in his language than Chaucer himself. His great poem is the story of Robert Bruce and his noble companions, Douglas and Randolph, Earl of Moray.

Of the English poets, with a reference to Lawrence Minot, who celebrated the exploits of Edward III. in martial poems, and has, therefore, been styled the Tyrtæus of his age, we shall now only mention Gower and Chaucer.

John Gower was of an ancient and opulent family—we believe the Duke of Sutherland claims him as his ancestor—and he consequently received the best education that the age could supply. He was born in 1324, and entered the Inner Temple at a suitable age. He rose high in his profession, and indulged himself in his leisure hours in poetry. Gower wrote, besides smaller pieces, three considerable poems, one in Latin, one in French, and one in English, namely:—"Speculum Meditantis," "Vox Clamantis," and "Confessio Amantis." There is no question that they possess much poetical merit, and they were greatly admired in their own time and long afterwards, but at present they would find few who could enjoy them. The "Speculum Meditantis" is a moral poem, recommending fidelity and mutual affection to married people; and hence Chaucer styled him the "Moral Gower"—a name which has continued with him. To our taste he is more moral than poetical. Gower was originally disposed to call for reform in the Church, which he describes in dark colours; but the rebellion of Wat Tyler frightened him, and he became strongly opposed to Wycliffe and his doctrines. Yet he was a timid courtier. He dedicated his "Confessio Amantis" to Richard II., and afterwards to his dethroner, Henry of Lancaster.

"This boke upon amendement
To stand to his commandement,
With whom min herte is of accorde,
I sende unto min owne lorde,
Which of Lancashire is Henry named."

There can be no doubt that the successful appearance of Chaucer in his native English induced Gower to do the same.

Chaucer was a far bolder, and far more original man. It is the most striking proof that English had now taken firm hold at the court itself, when two such men as Gower and Chaucer cast the chance of their fame into that vehicle. Chaucer was brother-in-law to John of Gaunt, having married Philippa, the sister of John of Gaunt's third wife, Catherine Swynford. Chaucer was educated at both Cambridge and Oxford. He was a page to Edward III., and went as ambassador to Genoa and Flanders. On the former occasion it is probable that he met with Petrarch, for he says in the prologue to the "Clerk's Tale":—

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

> "I wal you tell a tale, which that I
> Lerned at Padowe of a worthy clerk,
> Fruncis Petrark, the laureate poete."

Chaucer's great poem, the "Canterbury Tales," is a collection of poems which, for spirit, humour, knowledge and enjoyment of life, have nothing like them, except Shakespeare. They are full of vigour, beauty, and the most subtle sense. They sparkle, burn, and laugh on every page. We have the most vivid picture of the times, and all the varied characters amongst whom he lived. We feel what a buoyant, genial soul he was, and yet we know that he did not escape without his troubles and his deep griefs. Warton, in his "History of English Poetry," says of him:—"Chaucer surpasses his predecessors in an infinite proportion. His genius was universal, and adapted to themes of unbounded variety. His merit was not less in painting familiar manners with humour and propriety than in moving the passions, and in representing the beautiful or the grand objects of Nature with grace and sublimity." Truly is he called the father of English poetry, and he had no real successor till the appearance of Spenser and Shakespeare.

We have already traced (see chapter XXVI.) the progress of the Early English style of architecture from its rise and through the best period of its duration. It has been seen how, by combining into one window two or more lancets, and the circle above them, tracery was made. This at first was left solid and was not moulded, and the form of the tracery was simple—generally a circle, or circles, in the head or intersecting lines. The introduction of tracery gave great facilities for enlarging the width of the windows; and we accordingly find those of two or more lights gradually superseding the lancet.

After this change it is difficult to distinguish the late examples of one style from the early ones of the other; indeed, tracery may be regarded as the commencement of the transition. But in the beginning of the reign of Edward I. a more decided change took place—tracery proper became fully developed. However, the architects had not yet ventured on the graceful flowing lines of the true Decorated style; they clung to their geometrical forms, and therefore we find, in windows of this time, circles, triangles, both plain and spherical squares, quatrefoils, trefoils, &c.; and, for this reason, this style of Edward I. has been called Geometrical, or Early Decorated, which well distinguishes it from the fully developed, or flowing Decorated. This is, perhaps, the best period of English architecture; for, though the geometrical forms give a certain stiffness to the tracery, it is more than compensated by the extreme beauty and finish of the workmanship. The imitation of natural foliage was perfect, and the drawing of the human figure more chaste and finished than at any other period. The style continued through the reign of the first Edward, after which it gradually changed into that of the more perfect Decorated.

The Decorated style differs from the Early English in its windows, which, instead of being lancets, or having tracery of the simplest forms, had the head entirely filled with tracery, either of geometrical forms, or ramifying from the mullions in the most easy and graceful manner, and in every variety of design; and the same character distinguishes them from the next, or Perpendicular style, in which the mullions are carried through in perpendicular lines to the head of the window.

In the Decorated style, Gothic architecture seems to have attained its greatest excellency; this was its culminating point. Up to this period it had gone on improving from change to change; its principles had been fully carried out, and the fancy seems to have run wild in imagining new forms of beauty. The more we contemplate the buildings of this period the more we are struck with admiration at the wonderful powers of invention possessed by the architects and workmen of the time. Wherever ornament was wanted, there it was ready, and always beautiful and appropriate. They possessed a keen perception of the beauties of Nature, and hands capable of giving form to those perceptions. But when so much perfection had been attained, it is not unnatural, however it may be regretted, that the next change should be in a downward direction. This was the case here; and the introduction of the straight line led to the entire destruction of all that grace and freedom so much admired in Decorated Gothic architecture.

Many of our finest ecclesiastical buildings are in this style. The beautiful crosses of Northampton, Waltham, and Geddington, erected by Edward I. to the memory of his Queen Eleanor, are of the early or Geometrical period, and afford many valuable details.

Exeter Cathedral, the nave of York, the chapel of Merton College, Oxford, and the Chapter House, Wells, offer excellent examples of the Geometrical period.

The west front of York is the finest specimen of a Decorated front we possess, and the details are of the most exquisite description, both in design and execution.

The Chapter House, York, is of Early Decorated character. It is octagonal and groined, and is said by Rickman to be "by far the finest polygonal room, without a central pillar, in the kingdom, and the delicacy and variety of its ornaments are nearly unequalled." That it must, even at the time of its erection, have been considered "unequalled" is shown by the inscription at the entrance:—

"UT ROSA FLOS FLORUM,
SIC EST DOMUS ISTA DOMORUM."*

The Chapter House, Wells, is another extremely beautiful building of the same period, but this is supported by a central pillar.

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* "As the rose is the flower of flowers,
So is this the house of houses."

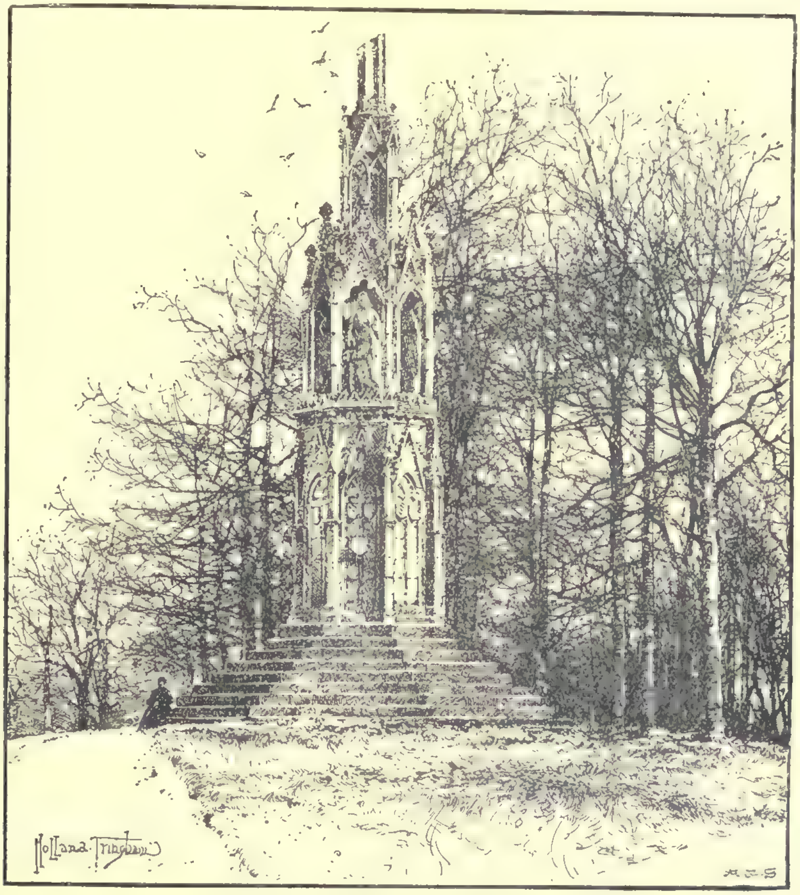
Many fine churches of this style are to be found in various parts of the kingdom, of which one of the finest is Howden, in Yorkshire; but many of them, though belonging to this period, are very plain in their details.

The monuments of this century are, both in composition and execution, the finest which exist. We have many fine bold compositions in Early English, and many very elaborate ones in the Perpendicular style, but none of them equal the Decorated in chasteness of design and delicacy of execution.

The monument of Aymer de Valence in Westminster Abbey is a fine specimen of Early Decorated; the Percy shrine at Beverley Minster is another splendid example; and the effigy of Queen Eleanor in Westminster Abbey is one of the most elegant figures in this or any other country.

TOWERS.—Many church towers in this style are finished with spires, which are frequently crocketed and have spire lights, and sometimes they are banded with quatrefoils.

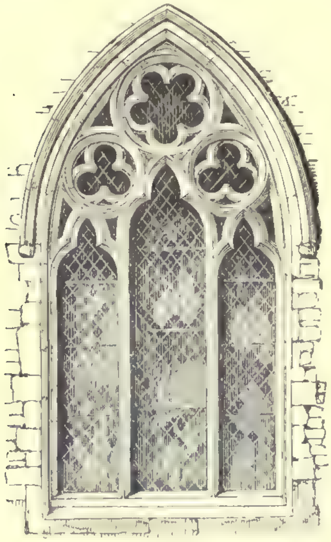
WINDOWS.—These are the most important features of the Decorated style, and will require the greatest attention. In its early period, or what is called Geometrical, the lancet window is still sometimes used; but it is foliated and not plain, as in Early English. The heads of two-lights windows are divided by arches springing from the mullions. The spaces are filled with triangles, trefoils, quatrefoils, circles, etc., all the forms being such as could easily be drawn with the compasses; but the ogee, or flowing curve, is never used. In larger windows the same filling up of the head with geometrical forms is used, and plain intersecting tracery is not uncommon. These forms are combined in many different manners, and great variety is produced. The



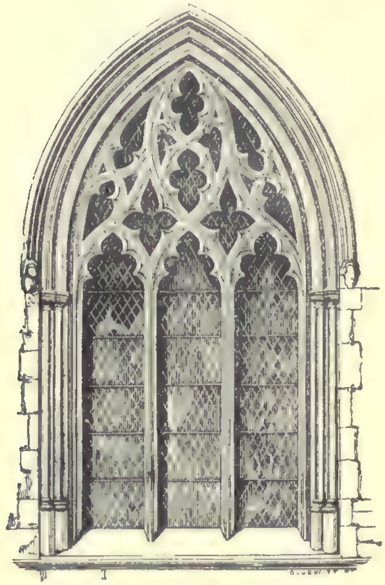
QUEEN ELEANOR'S CROSS, NORTHAMPTON.

window given from Meopham is an example of early tracery.

By an easy and natural process this stiff tracery gave way to the flowing line which succeeded it. One of the earliest modifications was to fill the head of the window with flowing quatrefoils. This was much used in the time of Edward II. The use of the flowing line gave such great facilities for design, that the varieties of tracery are almost innumerable; so much so, that they are difficult to describe, or even to classify, and in our small space it is impossible. They, however, all agree in one principle—that is, in the mullions branching into tracery, and not being carried through to the head of the window, as in the next style. The one given from St. Mary's, Beverley, is a good example for showing the manner in which the lines of the mullions were carried up. There are many windows in this style which have ogee heads and canopies.



WINDOW FROM MEOPHAM.



WINDOW FROM ST. MARY'S, BEVERLEY.

Doorways.—In small churches the doorways have frequently but little, except the mouldings, to distinguish them. These are carried without interruption down to the ground. They are commonly quite plain, but have sometimes hollows filled with the ball-flower or foliage. In cathedrals and large buildings the doorways are usually of large dimensions, and are often very deeply recessed. They are richly moulded, and the hollows filled with a profusion of ornament and foliage, among which the four-leaved flower and ball-flower are conspicuous. They have generally shafts, with capitals and bases; these shafts are not detached, as in the Early English, but cut in the same stone as the mouldings. Sometimes a series of niches with figures is carried round the door.

The finest examples we have of Decorated doors are those of the west front of York, and the south door of the choir, Lincoln. A canopy, either single or double, sometimes flowing and sometimes straight-lined and richly crocketed, is often carved over the door.

Porches are not numerous, but of great variety of form, and can in general be distinguished only by their mouldings and details. They have frequently a considerable projection, with windows in their sides and groined roofs. There is a very curious one at Over, in Cambridgeshire, which has clustered shafts and pinnacles at the angles. Wooden porches with ornamental barge boards are not uncommon.

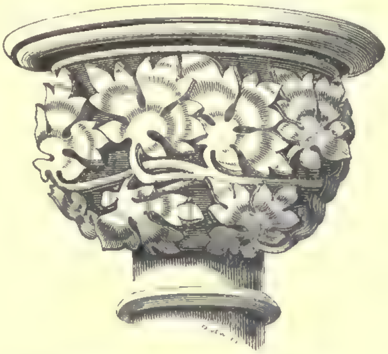
The **Buttresses** of this style are usually very rich. The earlier ones are in general finished with a small gable or canopy reaching as high as the parapet, as at Merton College, Oxford, where the pediment is filled with a trefoil, and the gargoyle, or water-spout, of grotesque design, passes through just under it. Below this is a panel of window tracery, and the lower stage of the buttress has another pedimented head. This kind of buttress, though commonly plainer, belongs to the Geometrical period. A much richer variety of the same kind occurs at the west front of Howden, where there is a canopied niche with a figure in it; and the buttress terminates in a turret pinnacle, with open-work tracery, and a crocketed spire. In the later period of the style the buttresses are in many cases enriched with canopied niches, with or without figures, in both stages. Sometimes they have a plain set-off instead of a pediment; but in all cases they may be known by their peculiar mouldings. They are also repeatedly set on the angles of buildings diagonally, which is not the case in the preceding style.

The PINNACLES are numerous, and very fine. They are in general square, and set on diagonally; the sides are frequently panelled, and terminate in crocketed canopies, or gablets, from which rises the spire, which is also crocketed at the angles, and terminates in a finial. The foliage of the Crockets and Finials is loose and free, and has not the square stiff form so observable in the Perpendicular.

The PILLARS of this style in small churches are occasionally octagonal or plain round; but in large buildings they are very various in section. They have, at times, a number of small shafts surrounding a central pillar; but these shafts are, like those of the doors, cut out of the same block, and not detached, as in the Early English style. In some instances the central mass is a lozenge, and in others a square set diagonally. In some cases, as at Exeter, it consists of a number of equal-sized small shafts set round a lozenge body. The small shafts are repeatedly filleted.

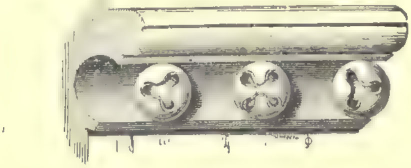
The BASES have not the rounds and deep hollows which we find in the Early English, but are generally made up of rounds or roll mouldings.

The CAPITALS are important, and form one of the most valuable marks of the style. They are often without ornament, and can then be distinguished only by their mouldings. Sometimes they have the ball-flower, and occasionally heads or human figures; but the most usual design is a wreath or ball of foliage. In the Early English style we see the stems of the foliage rising from the neck mould, or astragal, and turning over under the abacus of the capital; but in the present style we have most commonly a stem with its leaves wrapped round the bell of the capital, and filling up the space like a ball. The one here given from Selby is an excellent example of the general appearance of a rich Decorated capital; but the foliage is infinitely varied. Sometimes it is long and flowing, encircling the whole capital of a clustered column; but in general it is a faithful copy of natural forms, the oak, the ivy, the maple, and the vine being the plants most generally copied; and this is done with great delicacy and grace. Decorated foliage, whether of capitals, corbels, or cornices, is greatly superior to that of any other style; and nothing can exceed the skill with which it is drawn and carved.


DECORATED CAPITAL FROM SELBY.

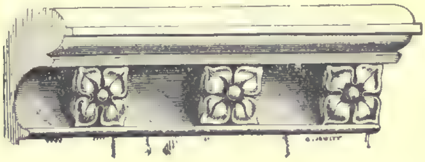
ARCHES.—These are not so acute as those of the Early English. The equilateral is the one most frequently used, but sometimes it is still lower. They are generally moulded, but the mouldings are in many instances bold quarter rounds or filleted rounds, and sometimes the arches are merely plainly chamfered. In a few instances the mouldings of the arch are carried down to the ground without the intervention either of capital or impost. In large buildings vaulting shafts are carried up the pillars to support the groining of the ROOF, which is much more complicated than in the Early English. Numerous extra ribs are introduced, and richly carved bosses placed at the intersections, which give it much richness and variety. Many beautiful open timber roofs of this style still remain, both in churches and houses. Stone groining is imitated in wood in cases where it would not be safe to place the weight of a stone roof on the walls.

The MOULDINGS and ORNAMENTS are quite as important in this as any other period, as a means of distinguishing one style from another, and fixing the date of a building. The mouldings have lost the boldness of the Early English, but they have gained a greater neatness. The rounds are not so wide, and have frequently one, two, or sometimes three small fillets running along them. Another moulding, very peculiar to this style, is a round, the upper half of which projects over the lower; it is called the *roll-moulding*. There are also two ornaments which belong almost as exclusively to the Decorated as the zig-zag to the Norman, or the tooth ornament to the Early English. These are called the *ball-flower* and the *four-leaved flower*, of which we give examples.



BALL-FLOWER, WITH ROLL-MOULDING AND HOLLOW.

They are used, particularly the ball-flower, in cornices, capitals, corbels, in the mouldings of doors and windows, and in every place where ornament can be used. The ball-flower is even used as crockets on the spire of Salisbury Cathedral; and the mullions and tracery of some of the windows in Gloucester Cathedral are completely filled with it.



FOUR-LEAVED FLOWER, WITH FILLETED, ROUND, AND HOLLOW MOULDING.

Diaper-work is very extensively used in this style in the backs of niches, on buttresses, and for covering spaces where other ornament could not well be used.

Towards the end of the reign of Edward III. a great revolution in architecture was in progress. The change was first indicated by the introduction of straight lines among the flowing tracery of the windows, by which the beautiful freedom of their design was much impaired. This was followed by the foliage and other ornamental parts becoming more stiff and formal, and losing their truthfulness to nature.

It is curious to see how this idea of the perpendicular line and of a tendency to general squareness of form seems to have taken possession of the minds of the architects of the period; and it can only be attributed to the inherent love of variety and a desire for novelty. All things showed the approach of a change, which certainly was not the work of any one individual, but was rather the effect of a pervading idea, until William of Wykeham embodied and improved it, and brought out the new or Perpendicular style, which will be the subject of a future chapter.

Of the Domestic Buildings of the fourteenth century many good specimens yet remain. They were almost all built more or less for defence; and the more exposed the situation, the more were the defences increased, until it is difficult in many cases to say whether a building should be considered a house or a castle. The saying that "An Englishman's house is his castle" was at this time literally true. They were mostly moated, and contained but few rooms, one of which was much larger than the rest—the hall.

Of the military strongholds, or Castles, properly so called, many of the finest we possess were built during this period; among which may be mentioned Carnarvon, Chepstow, Kidwelly, Pembroke, Windsor, Clifford's Tower in York, Warwick, etc. The masonry of these is of the most perfect description; the courses, as at Clifford's Tower, York, being laid regularly through the whole extent of the building; thus showing that in castellated, as well as in every other branch of architecture, the Edwardian period stands preeminent.

The art of Sculpture was necessarily inseparable from ecclesiastical architecture. In our churches of the feudal ages the sculptured canopies, chantries, tracery, and statues are of singular merit and great poetic beauty in many instances, and in none more than in those of this period. They show a marked advance on the prior period. Both in the Early English and the Decorated orders we have exquisite specimens of sculpture, in spite of the destruction of the Reformation and the ravages of time. At York, Ely, Lichfield, Durham, Wells, and Westminster Abbey we can yet admire the labour of the sculptors of the eras of Henry III. and Edward I. In the cathedrals of Glasgow and Aberdeen, as well as in the splendid remains of Elgin and Holyrood, we have yet traces of it. The foliage, the trefoils, and quatrefoils of this period are peculiarly free, natural, and simple. In the Decorated order, at Croyland and Tintern, in the nave at York, in the magnificent choir at Lincoln, at Beverley, Ripon, and Carlisle, as well as in the beautiful ruin of Melrose, and a few churches in Scotland, we ought not to pass over the sculpture. On many of these graceful works the monks themselves are said to have laboured, and Walter de Colchester, sacristan of the abbey of St. Albans, is expressly celebrated by Matthew Paris as an admirable statuary.

We are assured, too, that Painting was carried to a great extent in adorning the palaces and churches of this period, though we find scarcely any trace of it left. Henry III. kept several painters constantly at work, whose names are recorded, and who executed many beautiful paintings at his various palaces at Westminster, Winchester, Woodstock, Windsor, Kenilworth, etc. Bishop Langton painted the history of the wars and life of Edward I. on the walls of the episcopal palace at Lichfield. Edward III. collected by royal order painters from all quarters to decorate his palace at Westminster; and Foxe, in his "Acts and Monuments," tells us that the principal churches and chapels had not only portraits of the Madonna and the saints, but the walls were extensively decorated with paintings. So that, whatever its merits, painting was much in demand in this period.

Of Music as practised at this period we can only speak historically, for no proofs appear to have come down to us of the actual written music of the times. Though we had good writers on music in the fourteenth century, it is not till the fifteenth that we are enabled to judge of what the music of our ancestors was by actual notation. We know that both the ancient Gauls and Britons were extremely fond of music, and that at all the banquets of the nobles their minstrels accompanied their songs on the harp. The minstrel in most European countries was a union of the poet and musician. He composed his own music, and sang it. For this cause he was the welcome guest at all great houses. Every great baron—as well as our monarchs—kept his train of minstrels who composed songs in honour of their martial deeds, and sang them to the harp at their tables. Matilda, queen of Henry I., was, according to William of Malmesbury, so fond of music, that she expended all her revenues upon it, and oppressed her tenants to pay her minstrels. John of Salisbury declares that the great of his time imitated Nero in his extravagance towards musicians. He says they prostituted their favour by bestowing it on minstrels and buffoons.

Richard I. was not only extremely fond of minstrels, but was a distinguished one himself, and every one knows the story of his being discovered by his minstrel Blondel in his prison in Germany. Edward I. would have lost his life by assassination during the Crusades, but his harper, hearing the struggle, rushed in and brained the assassin with a tripod. We could accumulate a whole volume of such facts all through our history; but one which shows, too, how well the musicians were rewarded is, that Roger, or Raherus, the king's minstrel in the reign of Henry I., in the year 1102, according to Leland, founded the priory and hospital of St. Bartholomew, in West Smithfield, became the first prior, and so remained till his death.

The first Earl of Chester gave a freedom of arrest on any account to all minstrels who should attend Chester Fair, and the last earl was rescued from the Welsh who besieged him in Rhuddlan Castle, by a band of these minstrels and their followers, who rushed away from the fair for that purpose.

John of Gaunt established a court of minstrels at Tutbury, in Staffordshire, traces of which remained to our own times.

In the Middle Ages, Du Cange says that these men swarmed so about the houses and courts of the great, and princes spent such large sums on them, as completely to drain their coffers. In fact, it would appear in all ages of our history that a singer would, as now, carry off more in one season than a popular author would in his whole life. The king in those times had accompanying him, when he went on his warlike expeditions, besides the musicians of the army, and expressly attached to his own train, fifteen or more minstrels. The nobles had often large bands of them in their houses. We read in the household book of the Earls of Northumberland of the regulations for the minstrels; and Bishop Percy, one of that family, in his "Hermit of Warkworth," says:—

"The minstrels of thy noble house,
All clad in robes of blue,
With silver crescents on their arms,
Attend in order due."

Trokelowe the chronicler gives us a very curious passage demonstrating at once the state assumed by minstrels at this period, and the free access which they had to the very presence of royalty. What is more, it shows that women were now accredited minstrels. When Edward II. in 1316 solemnised the feast of Pentecost, and sat at table in royal state in the Great Hall at Westminster, attended by the peers of the realm, a certain woman, dressed in the habit of a minstrel, riding on a great horse, trapped in the minstrel fashion, entered the hall, and going round the several tables, acting the part of a minstrel, at length mounted the steps to the royal table, on which she deposited a letter. Having done this, she turned her horse, and, saluting all the company, she departed.

When the letter was read it was found to contain severe animadversions on the king's conduct; at which he was greatly offended, and the doorkeepers being called and reprimanded for admitting her, they replied "that it never was the custom of the king's palace to deny admission to minstrels, especially on such high solemnities and feast-days."

The harp was the great and favourite instrument, but we now find a number of others mentioned. The band of musicians in the household of Edward III. consisted of five trumpeters, one cyteler, five pipers, one tabret, one mabrer, two clarions, one fiddler, three wayghts, or hautbois. In a work of the time there are mentioned the following musical instruments: the organ, the harp, the sawtrey, the lyre, the cymbal, the sistrum, the trumpet, the flute, the pipe, the tabor, the nakyre, the drum, and several others. Some of these were used in martial, some in church music, and others in social and street music.

Chaucer, in the "Canterbury Tales," makes mention of "a ribible," as used by his parish clerk, who must have been a merry fellow:—

MINSTRELS AT A BANQUET IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY. (*See p.* 503.)

> "In trousty manir coulth he trip and daunce
> After the scale of Oxenford (Oxford) tho,
> And with his legges casten to and fro,
> And playing songs on a small ribible,
> Thereto he song sometimes a loud querrible;
> And as well could he play on a giterne."

The "giterne" was probably the guitar, and the cyteler, or citole, mentioned by Gower, the zitern, which has always been a favourite instrument on the Continent, and has of late years been introduced into England. Matthew Paris also speaks of musical instruments called "burdons," which were used in the church of St. Albans, and probably in others.

Church music, we are told by the old writers, was now as ardently studied by the clergy as secular music by the minstrels and gleemen. Music was taught in all colleges, cathedrals, convents, and capital churches; and the clergy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were by much the most able musicians, as well in instrumental as vocal music. The learned Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, who was also an excellent sculptor and goldsmith, was passionately fond of music as well as of fishing. He wrote a hand-book for anglers, "Manuel de Pêche"; and he had always a harper in the next room, and when wearied with his studies, he ordered him to play. Like Saul, he thought sweet music drove away evil spirits. Being asked—

"Why he held the harpe so dere?"

He replied,

"The virtue of the harpe, through skyle and ryght.
Wyll destroye the fendis myght,
And to the cros by gode skeyl
Ys the harp lykened weyl."

In the churches of this time some of the public offices were considered as musical exhibitions, and were frequented for amusement rather than devotion.

The clergy of the Middle Ages sought to amuse the people by their pageants and miracle plays, and to attract them by joyous music. To the various diversions of hunting, hawking, feasting, and dancing, which a king recommended to his daughter to chase away her melancholy, he added:—

FAIR AT WESTMINSTER IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY. (*See p.* 506.)

"Then shall ye go to your even-song,
With tenors and trebles among;
Your quire nor organ songe shall want,
With country note and discaunt;
The other half on organs playing,
With young children full fayn synging."

Guido Aretini's musical scale, invented in the eleventh century, had been now greatly improved by the addition of several characters for representing the various lengths of musical sounds, and music thus delineated was called *cantus mesurabilis*, or measured song.

Hand-organs of a rude construction were already known and to be seen in the streets of cities, but far more frequently the pipe, the tabor, and the drum, the fiddle, and even the harp, accompanying the feats of dancing dog and bear.

Both the foreign and domestic Commerce of England at that time seems to have grown and flourished, as it has continued to do almost ever since, from an innate and unconquerable tendency in the people towards trade and commercial enterprise, rather than from any fostering and judicious exertions of the Government. On the contrary, in the reigns of the great Edwards the knowledge of the principles of trade appears to have been as completely absent from the heads of those kings as their ruinous imposts and restrictions were calculated to crush it. In the reigns of the Edwards the chief articles of export or of raw material were allowed to be sold only in certain places; and sometimes this was one place, and sometimes another. Sometimes this staple or place of sale was at home, sometimes abroad. Edward II. ordered that all articles of the staple—as wool, sheep-skins, and leather—should not be carried as heretofore to places in Brabant, Flanders, and Artois, but to Antwerp only. Edward III. made Calais the staple when that town was captured in 1347; and in 1353 he removed it again, and ordered wool, woolfells, or sheep-skins, leather, and lead, to be sold only at Newcastle-on-Tyne, York, Lincoln, Norwich, Westminster, Canterbury, Chichester, Exeter, and Bristol for England; at Carmarthen, for Wales; and Dublin, Waterford, Cork, and Drogheda, for Ireland.

This was better than our merchants being obliged to carry all these commodities abroad; but repeated changes followed this. "The condition of the merchants," says Macpherson, in his "Annals of Commerce," "who were obliged to deal in staple goods was truly pitiable in those days of perpetual changes."

But this was not all. Suddenly and arbitrarily the king, when wanting to raise money on tolls, would proclaim a fair in Westminster, and compel all the tradesmen of London to shut up their shops, and carry all their goods thither. Matthew Paris tells us that when Henry III. did this, the fair lasted for a fortnight; and during that time all the fairs in the kingdom besides were suspended. He draws a dismal picture of the miseries and losses which the merchants suffered. The weather was dreadfully wet and cold. Their goods, removed from good shops to their tents, were drenched and spoiled, and they themselves were obliged to eat their victuals standing deep in the mud and wet. The people were loud in their complaints, but four years afterwards the king repeated the experiment, when it failed, for very few buyers came to it.

Fairs, indeed, seemed to engross the chief domestic trade of the nation; and people came to them from different countries. A fair at St. Giles's Hall, near Winchester, continued sixteen days. As at Westminster, all trade was prohibited during its continuance at Winchester, Southampton, and at any place within seven miles. Immense crowds from all parts of England and from abroad flocked to it. It resembled a great city, being laid out in regular streets, inhabited by foreign and domestic traders. To such fairs the kings, barons, prelates, and gentry of the time sent their agents, or went in person, and purchased jewels, plate, cloth, spices, liquors, furniture, horses, cattle, corn, and provisions of all kinds, men and women not excepted.

One of these fairs must have been a most extraordinary sight. Bartolomeus, a contemporary writer, assures us that men and women slaves were publicly sold in these fairs like beasts, down to the latter part of the fourteenth century.

The internal trade was not only oppressed by the arbitrary appointment of such fairs, and simultaneous closing of others, but by a host of greater and lesser impositions, called lastage, payage; passage, frontage, stallage, and others, now become unintelligible, though far too intelligible to those who were fleeced by them. Some of these taxes were demanded at every fair, and by every baron through whose domain they were compelled to pass. But if the internal trade of the country was thus oppressed, how much more the foreign. In 1275 Edward I. issued an order compelling all foreign merchants to sell their goods within forty days after their arrival. No foreign merchants were allowed to remain in the country longer than that time, except by special licence from the king. It was not till 1303 that Edward permitted foreign merchants to come and go freely, and to reside under the protection of the English laws; and it was not till fifty years afterwards that they were freed from the oppressive law of being obliged to answer for the debts and offences of every other foreign resident. In 1306 a number of foreign merchants were imprisoned in the Tower, and detained there till they gave security that none of them would leave the kingdom or export anything without the king's licence.

In 1307 Edward prohibited any coin being taken out of the country. In 1335 Edward III. made a like law, prohibiting either money or plate being taken out, on pain of forfeiture of all such property. Sworn searchers were appointed at all the ports; and in 1343 these regulations were repeated, and the searchers were to receive one-third of all the money or plate seized. All foreign cloths were to be reduced to the English measure; all were to be measured by the king's aldnagers, and whatever cloth was found of a less measure in length or breadth was to be forfeited.

How commerce could exist under such absurd restrictions is marvellous. Yet the advantages of trade with this country must, under all these obstacles, have been greater than with most others, for foreign merchants flocked hither in great numbers. They were called "merchant-strangers"; and forming themselves into companies, they soon managed to engross nearly all the foreign trade of the country. The Merchants of the Steel Yard were a most flourishing company of German merchants, who were settled here before the Conquest, but at this period were become much more opulent and powerful. This was owing to their connection with the celebrated confederation of the Hanse Towns, and to the privileges conferred on them by successive monarchs in consequence of that connection.

Then there were the Merchants of the Staple, who were established about this time. Their business was to collect the staple articles, wool, sheep-skins, leather, lead, and tin, and convey them to the staple towns. Englishmen, Irish, or Welsh might do this to the staple towns within the kingdom, but no native could be concerned in exporting them to the staple towns abroad. The great object was to enable the king to collect his customs easily, and that foreign merchants might know where to go for these articles. There were six moderators—two Germans, two Lombards, and two English—appointed to settle all disputes in the presence of the mayor and constable of the staple, for their affairs were not subject to the ordinary magistrates.

The Jews, who had been so fleeced in John's reign, were, for their wealth and usurious habits, banished from the realm in 1290.

According to Macpherson's "Annals of Commerce," the total exports of England in 1384 were £212,338 5s., and the imports £38,383 16s. 10d., leaving a balance in our favour of £173,954. But Anderson, in his "Annals," makes the balance more considerable, namely, £255,370.

During this period coals began to be used in England, and were brought by sea to London. The monks of Dunfermline, in Scotland, also obtained leave of a neighbouring baron to dig coals for their own use in his lands at Pittencrief.

Bills of exchange were now much in use, being much encouraged by the Government, under the idea that they prevented money going out of the kingdom, and in 1381 a law was passed recommending, and, in fact, commanding, their use in foreign transactions.

One of the most useful and creditable transactions of the reign of Edward III. was the issue of a gold coinage. The coinage of England had till this period consisted of silver, and chiefly in the form of marks and pennies; a mark being two-thirds of a tower-pound, the pound not being a real coin, but a pound weight of silver coins. The shilling also was a nominal coin at this time, being the twentieth part of a pound. The penny was the two hundred and fortieth part of a pound, and there were also silver halfpence and farthings; but the people often made these by cutting the pence into halves and quarters—a practice against which various ordinances were issued. At this time a penny was called an *esterling*, or *sterling*, whence our word sterling coin.

The gold coins circulated before this period were foreign, and called bezants, or byzantines. Henry I. issued a gold coin of the weight of two silver pennies, which was ordered to pass for twenty silver pennies. The people, however, refused it, as gold being only reckoned nine times the value of silver, the king had thus made it ten times the value, which was one-tenth more than the real value. So completely did this coin disappear, that no specimen, we believe, is now known of it.

Edward I. issued in 1279 a silver coin equal to four silver pennies, and called it a gross, or groat, that is, a great penny. No coins of the reign of Edward II. are known certainly to remain, but there are a few which are surmised to be his.

The new gold coinage of Edward III., issued in 1344, consisted of florins (so-called from the gold coin of Florence), to pass for six shillings; half florins for three shillings; and quarter for one shilling and sixpence. But he had committed the same fault as Henry I., and overvalued these coins, which prevented the circulation. To remedy this error, he coined in the same year gold nobles, half nobles, and farthing nobles, valued respectively at six shillings and eightpence, three shillings and fourpence, and one shilling and eightpence. The coin was called a "noble" because of the fineness of its metal. This coinage continued to circulate to the end of this period.

To prevent extortion in exchange of these moneys, and probably to secure a little profit to the Crown, Edward took the whole matter into his own hands, appointing official exchangers in every part of the kingdom, making a profit of one and one-fifth per cent. by the transactions. The great loss to the public in those times was occasioned by the extensive clipping of the coins. To such a degree had this taken place in the time of Edward I., that the Jews being accused as the chief offenders, he seized in one day, and hanged with very little trial, 244 of them. At the same time all the goldsmiths in the kingdom were taken and put into prison, on suspicion of participation in the crime.

The rate of interest was high at this period, seldom less than ten, more often twenty per cent., and, in the case of the Corsini, sixty per cent. The Church of Rome prohibited the lending of money on usury; and yet, when the Bishop of London excommunicated the Corsini, who were the papal agents, the Pope protected them, or they must have suffered the fate which overtook the Jews.

The method of coining at this time was simply by beating out thin plates of silver into a roundish form, and stamping them by a blow with a hammer. The coins were, of course, of rude workmanship.

The coins minted in Scotland in the reign of Edward III. were so much less in value that he prohibited their circulation, but ordered it to be brought to the mint as bullion. The old coins, however, he permitted to circulate. The first gold coins of Scotland are of the mintage of Robert II., 1371 to 1390. In Ireland there were several coinages of money, but in 1339 appeared a foreign inferior money called turnkeys, or black money, which was allowed to circulate from the scarcity of better.

The British sailors, during the period under review, greatly augmented the character for skill and bravery which they had acquired in King John's time. The great victory of Edward III. at Sluys, and their subsequent ones, placed them at the head of the maritime world. The Monk of Malmesbury before that, in 1315, had written thus of them:—"English ships visit every coast, and English sailors excel all others, both in the arts of navigating and of fighting." Whether this character at this time was quite true, as regarded the skill in navigation of the Genoese, is doubtful; but in fighting, they had shown their superior valour by beating the Genoese in the French service at sea, just as their comrades had done on land. The royal navy in these reigns does not appear to have been at any time numerous. The number of the ships of war of Edward II. that we are made acquainted with was only five. Of the size of these we have no information; but as early as 1270 we read of a ship of Venice which was 125 feet long, carrying 110 men. Edward III., in 1360, ordered the vessels intended to transport his troops to France to carry forty mariners, forty men-at-arms, and sixty archers. Edward's admiral and the mariners of the Cinque Ports captured no less than eighty vessels off the French coast, of which one had been purchased some years before for 5,000 francs. This was a large fleet itself. But in size the Genoese vessels must have greatly exceeded the largest of these, as we read of some of them, ship and cargo, being valued at £60,000 and £70,000 each.

The large fleets of England, however, with which Edward transported his armies and fought his sea-fights, were chiefly merchant vessels, collected by the most arbitrary authority as wanted. The press-warrants of that day show us that those who executed them were empowered to seize all vessels, great and small, that were in port or that came into port; to cause them to be unloaded, if necessary; and to conduct them at once to the place of rendezvous. In this manner were speedily mustered the 738 vessels which were drawn up at the siege of Calais, and the 1,100 vessels with which Edward invaded France in 1359.

London and Yarmouth were the two great seaports of that day, and there appears every reason to believe that Edward on this latter occasion had at least half of the whole mercantile navy of England in his service. The number of English ships was found at this time to diminish rather than to increase; nor can this be any matter of wonder. The violent seizures of trading vessels, the interruptions of commercial enterprises, and the necessary losses of property, were enough to have destroyed the whole commerce of any less vigorous country. Added to this, the encouragement of the merchant strangers, who carried on a great part of their trade in foreign bottoms, no doubt, was an additional cause of this decrease.

An event, however, took place in 1302 of unparalleled advantage to navigation—the invention of the mariner's compass by Flavio di Gioja of Amalfi. This opened up new oceans and new worlds to Europe; and already in the reign of Edward III. Nicholas de Leuna, a Carmelite friar, is said to have made five voyages of discovery towards the north pole, and presented to that monarch a description of the countries which he had seen. In 1344, one Macham, an Englishman, is said to have discovered Madeira, and in 1395 some French and Spanish adventurers discovered the Canaries.

Scotland during this time must have displayed considerable maritime enterprise, for the Scottish captain John Mercer, in one of his daring cruises, made great destruction amongst the English merchant vessels, till Alderman Phillpot of London encountered and took him prisoner. So bold were the Scots in 1335 and 1337, that they seized English vessels at the very mouth of the Thames; attacked and plundered Guernsey and Jersey; sailed along the southern coast of England; took a number of vessels lying at the Isle of Wight; and cruised along the eastern shore, doing much damage, till the equinoctial gales drove them home.

The manners and customs which prevailed during this period bore a great resemblance to those we have described in the preceding age. Yet, by the extensive expeditions of the English on the Continent, and to the East in the Crusades, various changes were introduced, and, if we are to believe the writers of the times, a great corruption of morals had taken place. Thomas Wykes, speaking of the civil wars in the reign of Henry III., says:—"In these five years past there have been so many battles, both by land and sea, so much slaughter and destruction of the people of England, so many devastations, plunderings, robberies, thefts, sacrileges, perjuries, treacheries, and treasons, that the nation hath lost all sense of distinction between right and wrong, virtue and vice."

ENGLISH SHIPS OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY. (*See p.* 508.)

No nation had shown such valour as the English, but none had shown so little mercy abroad, or the wise policy which puts on a show of it. We have seen how much the First and Third Edward gained by their arms, both in Scotland and France, and how they lost it all by the reckless cruelties which they inflicted on those countries, and their total neglect of every attempt to conciliate their good-will. Froissart, who does justice to the bravery and virtues of the English, blames them for their insolent and disgusting behaviour to people of other nations. "When I was at Bordeaux, a little before the Black Prince set out on his expedition into Spain, I observed that the English were so proud and haughty, that they could not behave to the people of other nations with any appearance of civility. Even the gentlemen of Gascony and Aquitaine, who had lost their estates in fighting for them, could not obtain the smallest place of profit from them, being constantly told that they were unfit for and unworthy of preferment. By this treatment they lost the love and incurred the hatred of those gentlemen, which they discovered as soon as opportunity offered. In a word, the King of France gained those gentlemen, and their countries, by his liberality and condescension, and the English lost them by their haughtiness."

The style of living of this period, however, at home, amongst the princes and aristocracy, was most magnificent—rudely so, it is true, but lavish and lordly. The enormous establishments of Edward II. and Richard II. we have described, the household of the latter consisting of 10,000 persons. Alexander III. of Scotland, being present at the coronation of Edward I., rode to Westminster, attended by 100 knights, mounted on fine horses, which they let loose, with all their furniture, as soon as they alighted, to be seized by the populace as their property. In this he was imitated by the Earls of Lancaster, Cornwall, Gloucester, Pembroke, and Warrenne, who each paid Edward the same expensive, unprofitable compliment.

The style of living amongst the great barons is shown by the household accounts of the Earl of Lancaster in 1313. In that year the earl expended £7,309, containing as much silver as £21,927, or equivalent to £109,635 of our money; nay, so very cheap were wines and some other things, that it would now-a-days require a far larger sum than this to maintain an equal hospitality. The quantity of wine consumed in the earl's establishment in that year was 471 pipes. Other earls and barons used up in free living all the revenues of their immense estates. Towards the conclusion of this period this profuse hospitality was on the decline, and, instead of dining in their great hall with their dependents, the nobles began to dine in private parlours with a few familiar friends. But this innovation was extremely unpopular, and subjected those who adopted it to much reproach.

It appears that painted ceilings and walls in the great houses prevailed even before the reign of Henry III. Scripture and romantic subjects prevailed in these decorations. The "Painted Chamber" at Westminster was embellished in this manner. In the romance of "Arthur of Little Britain" these painted walls and ceilings are described as "done with gold, azure, and other fresh colours," which is precisely the style of the old Byzantine school. In the reign of Henry III. they had painted glass windows, not only in churches, but in private houses, and with lattices which opened and shut. In different old illuminated MSS. we have specimens of the chairs, beds, reading-desks, and other furniture. The so-called chair of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey, still used as the coronation chair, is probably the oldest chair in England (see p. 341). In Strutt and other works may be found various things of this kind copied from the old writers. The wills of our sovereigns and nobles give accounts of other articles bequeathed; and the romances of the time abound in lavish descriptions of the splendour of the palaces and halls of knights and barons. The Countess of Pembroke in 1367 gives her daughter a bed with furniture of her father's arms. Lord Ferrers leaves his son his green bed with his arms thereon, and to his daughter his white bed, and all the furniture, and the arms of Ferrers and Ufford thereon. Beds of black satin, of red camora, of blue, red, and white silk, and black velvet, are mentioned. That of the mother of Richard III. was of red velvet, embroidered with ostrich feathers of silver, and heads of leopards of gold, with boughs and leaves coming out of their mouths.

Many of these beds have testers and canopies: in the will of Lady Neville, in 1385, is mentioned a "white couvrelit and tester, powdered with popinjays." Many, however, had hangings of tapestry all illustrated in needlework, with pictures of battles and great events, as well as scenes from the Bible and from the favourite romances, and Matthew of Paris tells us that Eleanor of Castile, wife of Edward I., covered the floor with tapestry, at which there was much scoffing.

Clocks which struck and chimed the hour are mentioned at the close of the thirteenth century; and Matthew of Paris gives us a rich idea of a cupboard of plate, containing a cup of gold, six quart standing pots of silver, twenty-four silver bowls with covers, a basin, ewer, and chasoir of silver. There is also frequent mention of silver and silver-gilt plate, dishes, chargers, salt-cellars spoons, silver lavatories, spice-plates, knives with silver handles, and a fork of crystal belonging to Edward I. Forks were used in Italy as early as 1330; but not till the seventeenth century in this country. Fire-screens standing on feet were in use in the reign of Edward I., and also ornamental andirons, or fire-dogs.

The feasts at coronations of kings, the installations of prelates, the marriages of great nobles, and similar high occasions, were profuse in the number of dishes, and the guests entertained sometimes amounted to thousands. The coronation banquet of Edward III. cost £40,000 of our money. At the installation of Ralph, Abbot of St. Augustine, at Canterbury, in 1309, 6,000 guests sat down to 3,000 dishes, which cost £45,000 of our money. At the marriage-dinner of the Earl of Cornwall to the daughter of Raymond, Count of Provence, at London, in 1243, 30,000 dishes were served up. The marriage-feast of Alexander III. of Scotland and Margaret of England, held at York in 1281, causes Matthew Paris to say:—"If I attempted to describe the grandeur of this solemnity, the number of the illustrious guests, the richness and variety of the dresses, the sumptuousness of the feasts, the multitude of the minstrels, mimics, and others whose business it was to amuse and divert the company, my readers would think I was imposing on their credulity."

Chaucer describes in his "Parson's Tale" the artificial Cookery to which they had attained, and adds: "They had excess of divers meats and drinks, boiled, roasted, grilled, and fried." They had "mortries," and blancmanges, "and such maner bake metes, and dish metes brenning of wild fire, paynted and castelled with paper and somblable waste, so that it is abusion to think."

The latter ornaments were what they called their "intermeats" (*entremets*). These represented battles, sieges, &c., introduced between the courses for the amusement of the guests. At a banquet given by Charles V. of France to the Emperor Charles IV., in 1378, there came a great ship into the hall as if of itself, the machinery being concealed. It came with all its masts, sails, rigging, and colours—the arms of Jerusalem—flying. Geoffrey of Bouillon, with several knights armed cap-à-pie, were represented on deck. Then appeared the walls of Jerusalem, and a regular siege, assault, and conquest of the city was gone through.

As for the drinks of the period, ale and cider satisfied the common people; but a great variety of foreign wines were imported and consumed by the wealthy. Warton, in his "History of English Poetry," quotes the following enumeration of wines known and used at this time:—

"Ye shall have Rumney and Malespine,
Both Ypocrasse and Vernage wine,
Montrese and wine of Greke,
Both Algrade and Despiceeke,
Antioch and Bastarde,
Pyment also, and Garnarde;
Wine of Greke and Muscadell,
Both Clare, Pyment, and Rochell."

Pyment, yprocras, and claret were compounded of wine, honey, and spices of different kinds, and in different proportions, and were considered as great delicacies. People of rank had two meals a day—dinner and supper. Princes and people of high rank had a kind of collation just before going to bed, called "the wines," consisting of delicate cakes and wine warmed and spiced. It would appear from a passage in Chaucer that they ate spiced condiments after their meals, as we take a dessert.

"There was eke wexing many a spice,
As clove, gilofre, and licorice,
Gingiber, and grain de Paris;
And many a spice delitable,
To etan whan men rise fro table."

It is clear that those who had wealth knew no contemptible amount of the art of good living.

The Costumes of this period were rich and varied. Loud complaints are made by the historians of the extravagance in dress, and laws were enacted both to restrain the excesses in dressing and eating. Edward II. decreed that none of the great men of his realm should have more than two courses at their meals, each to consist of only two kinds of flesh, except prelates, earls, barons, and the greatest men of the land, who might have an intermeat of one kind. In 1363, sumptuary laws restricting dress in like manner were passed in Parliament, but we are told that some of these laws were not at all regarded. "The squire endeavoured to outshine the knight, the knight the baron, the baron the earl, and the earl the very king himself."

We have examples of the different royal robes of the kings of that time in their statues. Henry III., in Westminster Abbey, has a long and very full tunic, and a mantle fastened by a fibula on the right shoulder, both devoid of ornament. But the boots are exceedingly splendid, being fretted or crossed with lines, and each square of the fret containing a lion or leopard. The cloth he wore is said to have been inwoven with gold, and on his head he wore a coronet or small chaplet of gold Edward I. has no statue, but on opening his tomb, he was found dressed very much like Henry III.; his tunic was of red silk, his mantle of crimson satin.

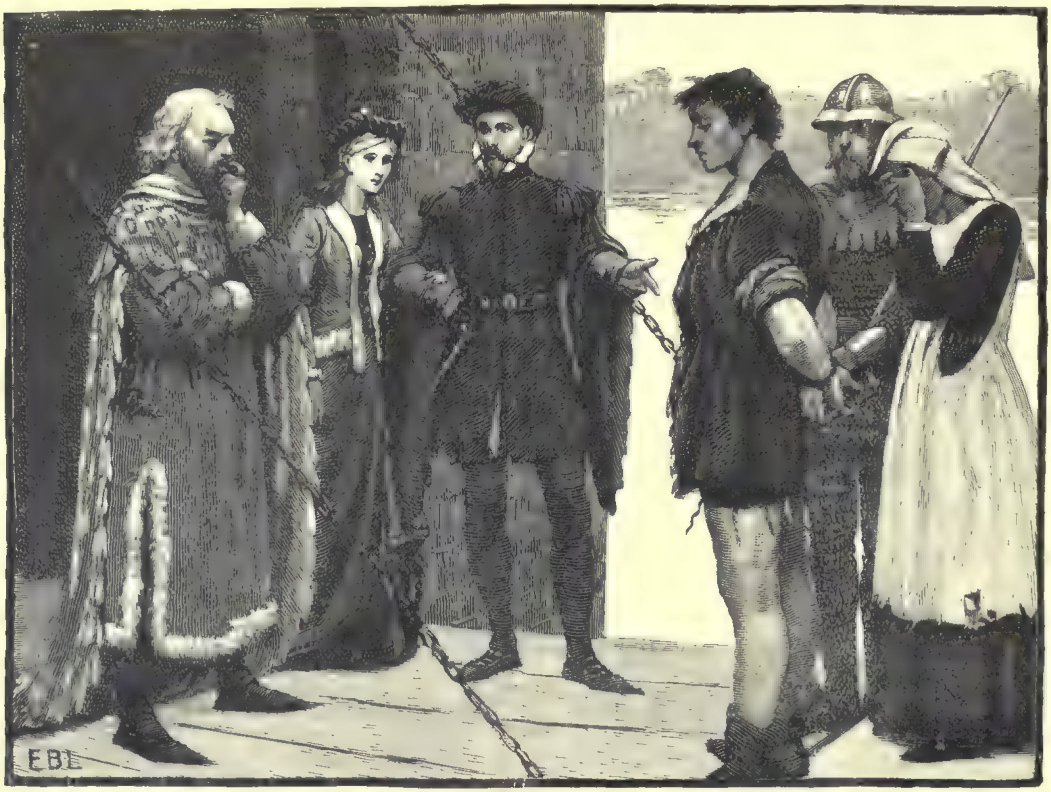
Edward II., in his effigies in Gloucester Cathedral, appears in a loose tunic with long streamers or tippets at the elbows, and his mantle open in front.

Edward III. appears in his loose tunic and mantle, both richly embroidered; his son William, in York Cathedral, in a close embroidered tunic and mantle, with jagged edges.

The military costume changed from the chain mail of the Knights Templars in the time of Edward III. to plated armour. Sometimes the helmet was closed with a visor, and in other cases had only a protecting piece of steel down the nose, called a nasal. To describe all the accoutrements, armorial bearings on shields, crests, and banners of the knights of this period, and the armour and caparison of their horses, would require a volume.

The dresses of gentlemen, in the early part of that period, consisted generally of a loose, long tunic, and over that the cyclas or contoise—a sort of mantle—and when travelling a supertotus, or overall. Short dresses afterwards prevailed, with close-fitting hose and shoes. The shoes in the early part of this time were well fitting to the foot, but afterwards assumed enormous long toes, which are represented as suspended to the knee by chains or cords, though no drawing of these suspended toes has come down to us. In the reign of Richard II. gentlemen's dresses again became long and very luxurious, often with open sides to their garments, and preposterously long-toed shoes. These were called *crackowes*, being supposed to come from Cracow, and had often their upper part cut in imitation of a church window. Chaucer's parish clerk, Absalom, "had Paul'is windows carven on his shose." The capuchon, or head-dress, in some cases resembled a simple cap or rounded hat, in others assumed very much the character of a turban.

Camden's description of a dandy of the fourteenth century is particularly ludicrous:—"He


EBL
Baron. *Lady.* *Gentleman.* *Peasant.* *Soldier.* *Peasant Woman.*

COSTUMES OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

ENGLISH MERRY-MAKING IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY; TILTING AT THE QUINTAIN. *(See p. 514.)*

wore long-pointed shoes, fastened to his knees by gold or silver chains; hose of one colour on one leg, and of another colour on the other. Short breeches, not reaching to the middle of the thigh; a coat, one half white, and the other half black or blue; a long beard, a silk band buttoned under his chin, embroidered with grotesque figures of animals, dancing-men, &c., and sometimes ornamented with gold, silver, and precious stones."

The Scots at this period dressed very much as the English, except in the Highlands. The Welsh were the least luxurious of any people in the island in dress, and the common soldiers of that nation at the battle of Bannockburn are said to have been conspicuous to the Scots by the scantiness and rudeness of their clothing.

The ladies' dresses were as varied. In the earlier period they wore long dresses, and on their heads a sort of hood or cowl; but in the reign of Edward II. they adopted a most becoming style of head-dress—that of simple bands or nets, supporting the hair in much elegance of form, and plaited and turned up behind. It has very much of an Eastern air, and probably was of Saracen origin, brought to Europe during the Crusades. Sometimes on this was worn a light sort of hood, with a silken bandage passing under the chin. Their dresses also assumed more the fashion of modern gowns. Aprons, richly embroidered, appeared, and the female costume of the time of Edward III. would pass very well now, the gown fitting elegantly to the bust, and of modern proportion. They had, however, the long narrow bands depending from the elbows, or from a little above them.

The diversions of those ages were very much the same as those of the former one, and, therefore, need no particular description. We are surprised to hear, towards the end of the reign of Edward III., that the practice of archery was on the decline amongst the people. Every man in the feudal ages in England who did not possess land to the value of forty shillings a year used to be required to qualify himself for a bowman; and the practice of archery in the villages, from boyhood upward, produced those famous bowmen who cleared the fields of Creçy and Poitiers of all opponents. Could it be the introduction of gunpowder and cannon which had already produced this effect? Yet Rymer says, "That art is now neglected, and the people spend their time in throwing stones, wood, or iron; in playing at the hand-ball, foot-ball, or club-ball; in bull-baiting and cock-fighting, and in more useless and dishonest games." Tilting at the quintain was a favourite sport at festive gatherings.

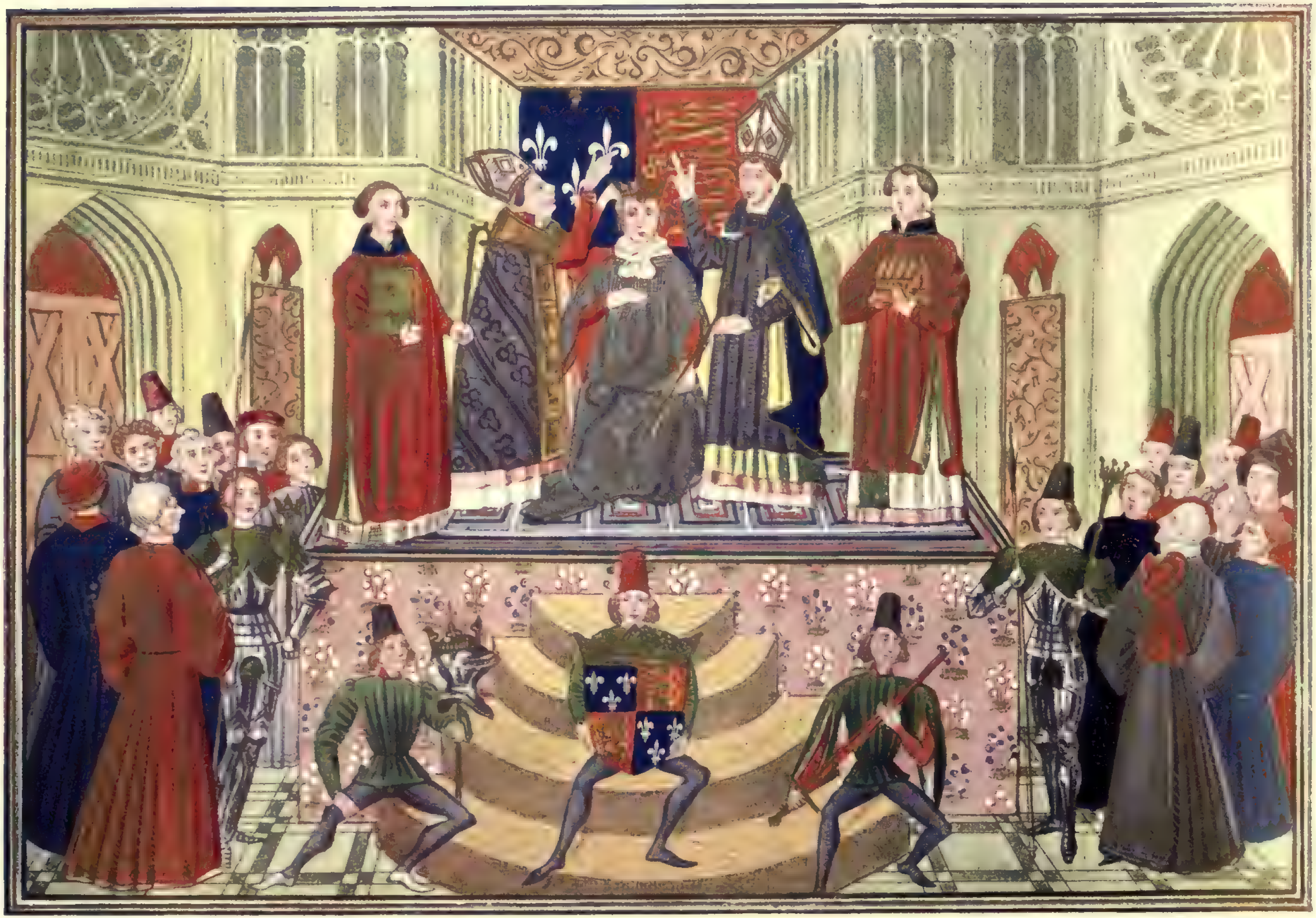
Wrestling for a ram was a popular amusement; and a wrestling-match of this kind between London and Westminster, in 1222, terminated in a regular battle, in which much blood was spilled.

By the "dishonest games" is probably meant such games of chance as cross and pile, to which the common people were then much addicted, and in which Edward II. spent both his time and his money; for there are found in this king's accounts items of money borrowed of his barber and the usher of his chamber while at such play. Card games were invented towards the end of the fourteenth century by Jacquemin Gringonneur, in Paris, to amuse the melancholy hours of the mentally afflicted Charles VI., but they do not appear to have been so early introduced into this country.

Tournaments, hunting, dancing, pageants, mummings, and disguisings were the amusements of the great, even the greatest, princes, and were the delectation of the people when they could witness them. At a masquerade at the court of Charles VI. in Paris, in 1388, the king and five young noblemen had dressed themselves as savages, with long hair of flax fixed to their robes by pitch, which caught fire from the torches, and the king was rescued with difficulty, while four of his companions were burnt to death.

The drama appeared in that day under the form of "Mysteries and Moralities," or "Miracle-plays," which were acted in the churches and monasteries by the clergy and monks, and in which the most sacred passages and personages of the Scriptures were introduced in the most free and extraordinary manner. From the clergy the drama by degrees passed over to the laity. In the streets the tragetours, or jugglers, gave extensive amusement; and, according to Chaucer, legerdemain must have reached considerable perfection, for he says the tragetours could make people believe they saw a boat come swimming into a hall; a lion walk in; flowers spring up as in a meadow; ripe grapes, red and white, appear on imaginary vines, castles, looking solid lime and stone, appear, and then vanish again.

Such is the picture of England in the fourteenth century. In arms she had won eternal and unequalled fame; in poetry, literature, and art she had made brilliant advances. Her churches were piles of glorious poetry in stone; and in poetry itself she had a Chaucer; in architecture, a Wykeham; in philosophy, Bacon and Grosseteste; a number of learned historians;



From the Froissart MS. in the British Museum.

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THE CORONATION OF HENRY IV. IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY IN 1399

Wycliffe had made the Bible common property, and given religion new wings, sending it to the cottage and the dwelling of the industrious citizen. In the constitution, the Great Charter had been confirmed, and many excellent statutes passed, restraining the royal and baronial power, and extending that of the people. Gunpowder and cannon were come to change all warfare, and make strong castles useless. Manufactures had been introduced by the noble Queen Philippa of Hainault. Gardens of culinary vegetables, of medicinal herbs, and of flowers, as well as *pomaria*, or orchards, were becoming general, though vineyards were fast dying out; and, altogether, it must be pronounced a distinguished and progressive era, which did its duty to the common country and to posterity—except in the two important domains of morals and of humanity.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

REIGN OF HENRY IV.

His Coronation—The Insecurity of his Position—He courts the Clergy and the People—Sends an Embassy to France—Conspiracy to assassinate him—Death of King Richard—Rumours of his Escape to Scotland—Expedition into Scotland—Revolt of Owen Glendower—Battle of Homildon Hill—The Conspiracy of the Percies—The Battle of Shrewsbury, where they are Defeated—Northumberland Pardoned—Accumulating Dangers—Second Rebellion of the Percies with the Archbishop of York—The North reduced—The War in Wales—Earl of Northumberland flies thither—The Plague—Battle of Bramham Moor—Reduction of the Welsh—Expedition into France—Death of Henry.

THE reign of Henry IV. dates from the 30th of September, 1399, when he was placed on the throne of England by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, in the presence of the assembled Parliament. Having, as we have stated, made his claim to the throne in a speech as remarkable for its disdaining to base his pretensions on the choice of the people as for its being delivered in the English of the day, in which we have given it—a proof that the language of the country was now recognised as that of all classes—he adjourned the Parliament till the 6th of October. On that day he was crowned in Westminster by Arundel, the Archbishop of Canterbury, with a careful observance of all the ancient ceremonies, and some new ones introduced, to give additional effect to the title of a conscious usurper. He had the sword which he wore on landing at Ravenspur borne naked and erect before him by the Earl of Northumberland, thus again asserting his title as of the sword; and he conferred the Isle of Man, which had belonged to Sir William Scrope, the Earl of Wiltshire, on the earl, in fee "for himself and his heirs, for the service of carrying this sword at the present and all future coronations."

All the great barons who held by patent hereditary offices on the occasion performed their several services with apparent alacrity, and everything wore an outward air of smoothness and prosperity. Within three months Henry of Lancaster, an exile from the realm, had landed on its shores, deposed and imprisoned his rightful sovereign, and sat there the anointed king.

But he was well aware that he sat there by no single right, except that which he had so determinedly rejected—the election of the people—and that he was surrounded by a thousand elements of danger. Richard, the true king, was still alive, and, though at present unpopular with the people, had many partisans, who had rather been surprised into silence than permanently satisfied. The rightful and acknowledged heir to the throne was the young Earl of March, who, though yet only a boy of seven years of age, had powerful connections in the Percies, the Mortimers, and other great houses. This young nobleman was the direct descendant from Lionel, Duke of Clarence, the elder brother of John of Gaunt, the father of Henry of Lancaster. Not only was the Earl of March the true lineal heir to the throne, but his father, Roger Mortimer, had been so declared by Richard II. by Act of Parliament. This youth, thus unceremoniously set aside, Henry had taken care to secure the possession of, and kept him and his younger brother in a sort of honourable confinement at Windsor.

Besides the direct claim of the young Earl of March, Richard, Earl of Cambridge, himself a son of Edmund, Duke of York, and married to the sister of the Earl of March, regarded himself as injured by the invasion of the throne by Henry. The claims of the Earl of March were not at this crisis ever mentioned by any party, and therefore Henry took care to keep silence on them. He did not so much as attempt to procure from Parliament, when it met, an act of settlement of the crown in his family, as that would have implied a doubt of his legal right; but he elected his eldest son Prince of Wales, Duke of Guienne, Lancaster, and Cornwall, and he was named in Parliament heir apparent to the throne.

These steps were necessary to secure his hold of the throne at home. In France he had created a determined enemy in Charles VI., whose son-in-law he had deposed, and whose daughter he, in a manner, held captive, after having deprived her of her share of the crown of England. France, accordingly, threatened vengeance, and might be expected to incite the Scots to annoyance; and, besides being under the necessity of arousing the hostility of the friends and partisans of those nobles whom he resolved to punish for past offences to his family, he knew that he had laid himself under such obligations to those who had aided his designs as would be difficult to discharge to the height of their expectations.

Henry, therefore, went craftily to work. On dismissing the Parliament, he had instantly ordered the issue of writs for the assembling of a new one, returnable in six days. This necessitated the return of the very same men, for the time was far too short for a fresh election. He was certain of their obsequiousness, and would not risk a delay which might give time for the people to think, and to send up members who might at least raise difficulties. He declared that he did this for the profit of the kingdom, to spare the expenses of an election, and for the more prompt redress of grievances; but he took care to add that he did not mean this to be drawn into a precedent, to the prejudice of future Parliaments and of the kingdom.

It must have been on the tried compliancy of the Commons that Henry chiefly relied, for in the Lords he had much disagreeable and dangerous work to do; and he found the Commons as obedient as he could desire. He immediately moved the repeal of all the acts which had been levelled at his family and partisans during the late reign, and had the attainders of the Earls of Arundel and Warwick reversed. But now came into play the powerful passions of the aristocracy—the terror of some, the hopes of others, the jealousies and animosities of all. It was at once seen how needful to Henry was the support of a devoted Commons. He summoned the lords who had appealed to the Duke of Gloucester and his associates to justify their proceedings. This was raising a storm of the most furious description. The noblemen concerned put forward the same plea as the judges had done in the late reign—namely, that they had only acted under compulsion; that they had neither framed nor advised the appeal, but were compelled to sign it under terror of the threats of Richard. They asserted that they were no more guilty than the rest of the lords who had joined in condemning the appellants. This was touching the sore spot of the whole assembly, and the most terrible altercation arose. When Lord Fitzwalter made the charge against the Duke of Albemarle, twenty other lords joined in it, for Albemarle had been a notorious traitor to both sides, and forty hoods were flung down on the floor of the House as pledges of battle in support of their assertions. The accused flung down his hood in acceptance of the challenge, and all were taken up and given into the custody of the constable and Earl Marshal. When the Lord Morley charged the Earl of Salisbury with falsehood to the Duke of Gloucester, and with betraying the secrets of Gloucester to the late king, Salisbury met his accusation with a direct denial, and both cast down their gloves in pledge of battle.

Nothing but the most settled purpose of vengeance on his enemies would have induced the cautious Henry to rouse such a tempest at this moment. But he was sure of the popular branch of the Legislature, and, probably, he felt that division amongst the haughty barons was strength to his own hands; and that only while they were in violent repulsion from each other could he safely humiliate those whom he had in view.

When the storm was at its height, Henry interposed, and, while the conflicting peers were in fiery antagonism with each other, he let fall his intended blow on the party which had supported Richard against his uncle Gloucester and himself. The lords appellant were stripped of the honours and estates which they had obtained from Richard as the rewards of their appeal; and the Dukes of Albemarle, Surrey, and Exeter, the Marquis of Dorset, and the Earl of Gloucester, descended again to their former ranks of Earls of Rutland, Kent, Huntingdon, Somerset, and Lord le Despenser.

To prevent the repetition of such scenes in future, appeals of treason to Parliament were prohibited, and such appeals were directed to be carried to the established courts of law. Treason itself was again limited to the offences named in the celebrated Act of Edward III. The abuse introduced by Richard of delegating all the powers of Parliament to a mere committee of both Houses was declared unconstitutional and utterly inadmissible; and the heaviest penalties were enacted against any person but the king giving liveries to his retainers.

Henry proceeded to reward his friends. As he had punished his enemies by deprivation of honours and estates, he now restored the Earls of Warwick and Arundel to their former ranks and properties. He constituted the Earl of Northumberland constable, and Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, marshal of England; and, as he had bestowed the Isle of Man on Northumberland, he now gave the earldom of Richmond to Westmoreland. Besides these, he conferred many other honours, grants, and offices.

HENRY IV.

Before dismissing Parliament, he submitted to the lords spiritual and temporal, through the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Earl of Northumberland, an especial matter for their advice, and they were charged to keep the subject an inviolable secret. This was no other than the disposal of the deposed king. Henry declared, as we have already stated, that at all events he was resolved on the preservation of his life. The lords gave it as their advice that he should be placed under the custody of trusty officers, who should convey him secretly to some castle, where no concourse of people could assemble, and where he should be strictly excluded from all approach of those who had formerly been in his service. Four days after this the king went to the house, expressed his approval of the advice of the lords for the secure detention of Richard, and ordered it to be carried into instant and permanent effect.

Henry appeared now firmly seated on the throne of his unhappy cousin. There can be no doubt that it had been the dream and object of his life's ambition. His father before him, and his uncle Gloucester, had shown no equivocal signs of a desire to seize the crown of that unfortunate prince, and one after another they had usurped the actual power into their own hands. But Henry, more crafty and calculating, watched his opportunity, and did not make a decided grasp at it till he felt sure of the favour of the people. Though he had now reached the height of his ambition, he still as carefully courted the favour of the people and the Church, in order to consolidate his new power. To give the people an idea of the auspicious change they had made in their sovereign, he issued a proclamation commanding all the blank bonds which had been extorted from them by Richard and his courtiers to be made null, and committed to the flames. To ensure the continued favour of the clergy, he now took a very different course to that which both he and his father, John of Gaunt, had done formerly. Then they were the great champions of Wycliffe; now he withdrew his countenance from the Reformers, and paid the most marked attention to the interests and ceremonies of the Church, and to the persons and wishes of the clergy.

But no precautions, no subtlety of policy, could give peace and security to a throne raised so palpably on injustice and treachery as that of Henry of Lancaster. From within and from without he found himself menaced by danger. France rejected his alliance and threatened war. The Scots, expecting the French to make a descent on England in favour of Richard, burst into Northumberland in one of their favourite excursions of plunder, took and destroyed the castle of Wark, and committed extensive devastations. Henry sent the Earl of Westmoreland to negotiate with these troublesome neighbours, and the Scots, finding no French army arrive, accepted the offered terms, and retreated to their own country.

But a conspiracy was forming at this very time in his immediate neighbourhood. The lords appellants, who had been stripped of the honours and wealth heaped upon them by Richard, though they had probably escaped, to their own surprise, with their lives, incapable of sitting down satisfied, entered into a conspiracy to assassinate the usurper. During the Christmas holidays they met frequently at the lodgings of the Abbot of Westminster to plan his destruction, and the following scheme was the result of their deliberations. They agreed to celebrate a splendid tournament, to be held at Oxford, on the 3rd of January, 1400. Henry was to be invited to preside, and while intent on the spectacle, a number of picked men were to kill him and his sons.

The king was keeping his Christmas at Windsor, whither the Earl of Huntingdon, the notorious John Holland, who had a particular proclivity towards murder, presented himself, and gave him the invitation. Henry accepted it, Huntingdon, notwithstanding his partisanship with Richard, and his recent disgrace, being still the king's brother-in-law.

On the 2nd of January, the day previous to the tournament, the Earl of Rutland went secretly to Windsor and betrayed the whole plot to the king. It is said that Rutland had received a letter from one of the conspirators while at dinner, which his father, the Duke of York, would insist on reading, and the fatal secret thus coming out, York had compelled his son to reveal the whole to Henry at once. But it must be recollected that Rutland had as fatal a tendency to treachery as Holland had to murder. He had betrayed Richard while in Ireland, and on his return in Wales, had gone over at the critical moment to Lancaster. He now again entered into a murderous plot against the new king, and then, with equal facility, he betrayed his fellow-conspirators. It was an ominous mark of want of caution in the conspirators admitting him as one of their members to their secret. Henry was so well acquainted with the false nature of the man who had thus sacrificed every party that he had been connected with, that he hesitated to give credit to this story. At length, having convinced himself of the reality of the plot, he remained quiet during the day at Windsor, and in the dusk of the evening set out secretly to London.

The conspirators, who had with them the staunch friends of Richard, the Earl of Salisbury and Lord Lumley, assembled on the day appointed at Oxford, but were surprised to find that neither the king nor their own accomplice, Rutland, had arrived. Suspecting treachery, they resolved to lose no time, but to surprise Henry at Windsor, where they knew he had but a slender guard. With a body of 500 horse they made a rapid ride that evening to Windsor, but arrived only to find that the intended victim had escaped. They were greatly disconcerted, but their partisans having joined them from Oxford, they determined to raise the standard of revolt, and to give out that Richard was at large, and at their head in assertion of his crown and dignity.

In order to give credit to their story of King Richard's escape, they dressed up Richard's chaplain, Maudelin, to represent him. Maudelin was said to be so like Richard in person and features that every one who saw him declared that he was the king without doubt. Maudelin was supposed to be an illegitimate son of one of the royal family. He had been implicated in the illegal execution of the Duke of Gloucester at Calais, had adhered to Richard through all his fortunes, and was taken with him at Flint.

The army of the insurgents increased, but it is evident that their enterprise was ill-concerted, and their counsels were now distracted. Hearing that Henry was already at Kingston-on-Thames at the head of 20,000 men, they resolved to retire into the west. They went on, proclaiming Richard in all the towns and villages in their route, and the next evening they took up their quarters in Cirencester.

The young queen, according to several authorities, took a warm interest in this attempt. The Earls of Kent and Salisbury, it is said, went to Sunninghill, where she was staying, and told her that they had driven Bolingbroke from the throne; that her husband was at liberty, and was then on the march to meet her, at the head of 100,000 men. Overjoyed at this news, says Sir John Haywood, the queen put herself at their disposal, and took an extraordinary pleasure in ordering the badges of Henry IV. to be torn from her household and replaced by those of her husband.

The deception was a cruel one; but the murderer Huntingdon was not likely to be very considerate of the queen's personal feelings. It would be enough for him that drowning men catch at straws, and that the presence of the real queen might be more effectual even than a sham king. The poor queen set out with the Earls of Kent and Salisbury on their march towards Wallingford and Abingdon. She was with the barons when they entered Cirencester. But there a terrible fate awaited them. The mayor had received the king's writ to oppose and seize the traitors. He summoned the burghers and the people, and at midnight they made an attack on the quarters of Kent and Salisbury. On attempting to escape, the wretched noblemen found archers posted in every street; and, after a resistance of six hours, they were compelled to surrender, and were conducted into the abbey. In the middle of the following night, however, a fire breaking out in the abbey, which was attributed to their party, they were brought out and beheaded on the spot by the populace. The women, it appears, were as zealous in seizing the insurgents as the men, and that they did not exceed the king's orders is very clear, from the fact that Henry made a grant of four does and a hogshead of wine annually to the men, and of six bucks and a hogshead of wine to the women of that town.

The unfortunate Isabella was reconducted, strictly guarded, from Cirencester to the palace of Havering-at-Bower; and this continued her place of residence during the tragical transactions which followed this abortive insurrection.

The fate of the other leaders of the revolt was summary and sanguinary. The Earl of Gloucester and Lord Lumley went into the west of England, as was proposed, but were seized and put to death by the populace at Bristol. As for Huntingdon, the accounts of his end vary. One relation says that he was seized in Essex and committed to the Tower on the 10th of January, and five days afterwards beheaded, with circumstances of great cruelty. But others, and apparently the more probable, are that he was taken in Essex, and conveyed to Pleshy, the seat of the late Duke of Gloucester, and, as one of those who had been associated with the late king in the treacherous arrest and murder of the duke, was put to death at the suggestion of the Duchess of Hereford, the eldest of Gloucester's daughters. Such was the sanguinary termination of this ill-advised and ill-conducted insurrection — a proper prelude, as Henry the historian has justly observed, "to those scenes of blood and cruelty which followed in the long contest between the Houses of York and Lancaster, occasioned by the fatal ambition of Henry IV."

A movement was now made by the Royal Council, undoubtedly originated by Henry, for ascertaining the fate of the deposed king. The late insurrection had shown the perils resulting to the usurper from the presence of the true king—though in strict concealment. So long as Richard remained alive would attempts be made by his partisans to restore him; and, however popular Henry might be for a time, he was too well versed in human nature not to be aware that any cause of offence on his part, any héavy imposition or restriction of liberty, however necessary, would immediately turn the public mind to the dethroned monarch, and operate in the latter's favour. These considerations, there is reason to believe, had led to his immediate destruction. From the day that he had been left in the Tower after his formal abdication, the most profound mystery had covered his existence. There were many stories of his being, like Edward II., conveyed secretly from one castle to another by his keepers. It was said that he had been kept some time in Leeds Castle in Kent, and thence removed to Pontefract. But no one really knew where he was, or how he was treated. But now news had reached the court of France that Richard was really dead, and the council of Henry, as if of their own accord, placed a minute on their book to this effect:—"It seemeth expedient to the council to speak to the king, that in case Richard, lately king, &c., be still alive, he be put in safe keeping, in conformity with the advice of the lords; but if he be departed this life, that then he be *shown openly to the people*, that they may have the knowledge of it."

The answer to this, as intended, was the showing openly the body, which was brought up from Pontefract Castle with considerable funeral pomp, namely, in a carriage drawn by two horses, one placed before the other. A peculiar arrangement was adopted, the face from the eyes to the chin being left uncovered, the rest of the body being carefully concealed. The carriage was covered with black cloth, having four banners emblazoned with the arms of St. George and St. Edward. It was attended by 100 men all clad in black, and was met on its approach to the city by thirty Londoners dressed in white and bearing torches. King Henry himself walked in procession, bearing a corner of the pall.

But this public exposition, so far from having satisfied the public mind of Richard's death, was the fruitful source of continued rumours of his existence, and perpetuated the very effects which Henry intended it to dispel—repeated revolts for his restoration. Very strong was the belief that Richard was still alive and even at liberty, and that this was a mere mock funeral, and the corpse that of some other person, probably the priest Maudelin.

The accounts of Richard's death, given by contemporary writers, are chiefly three. Walsingham asserts that he died in Pontefract Castle on the 14th of February, 1400, from voluntary starvation, having fallen into a profound melancholy on hearing of the failure of the insurrection on his behalf, and the execution of his half-brother, John Holland, and the rest of his friends. Thomas of Otterburn confirms this account, except that he adds that Richard being persuaded at length to take food by his keepers, found the orifice of his stomach closed from long abstinence, and perished in consequence. The chronicle of Keniiworth, the chronicle of Peter de Ockham in the Harleian collection, and Hardyng, assert that he was starved to death by his keepers.

The story of his assassination by Sir Piers Exton and his eight ruffians is found in a French manuscript work in the Royal Library at Paris,

GREAT SEAL OF HENRY IV.

and is repeated by Fabyan, Hall, and Haywood. The account of Fabyan is that followed by Shakespeare, which has given it a firm and world-wide hold on the public mind. All these accounts agree in the fact that the murder of Richard, in whatever shape it took place, occurred in Pontefract Castle. Tradition has had but one constant voice, also fixing it there, and in 1643 three gentlemen of Norfolk visiting that castle record that they were shown the highest of seven towers, called "the round tower," as the one in which Richard fled round a post in combat with his butchers; and they add, "Upon that post the cruel hackings and fierce blows do still remain."

It can hardly be doubted that Richard really died at this time; nevertheless, some mystery hung over his death, and it was not long before a false Richard appeared in Scotland, having, it was said, escaped from Pontefract. He was positively declared by the former jester of King Richard to be that king, and also by the sister-in-law of the Lord of the Isles, who declared she had seen him in Ireland. This supposed Richard is declared by Wyntoun "to have seemed half-mad or wild, from the manner in which he conducted himself," and therefore it was supposed that he had lost his understanding through his misfortunes. Though we are told that Lord Percy and other noblemen came to him, we are also informed that he would not see them. Yet for seventeen years at least, was this mysterious personage maintained at the court of Scotland as the veritable King Richard. But it appears that he was kept in the closest seclusion. Now, had the King of Scotland been confident that he had the real King Richard, nothing could have strengthened him so much against his enemy of England, as to have let all those English noblemen and gentlemen who were familiar with Richard have the fullest opportunity of verifying him. As such was not the case, we may fairly infer that there were sufficient reasons for avoiding this test, and that the pretended Richard was what he was called by Henry of England in his proclamations, the *mawmet*, or puppet, which it was convenient

ARREST OF THE CONSPIRATORS AT CIRENCESTER. (*See p.* 519.)

for Scotland to play off against England, whenever it was useful to stir up an insurrection. He was identified by some with one Thomas Ward, a man of weak intellect. Still, there is sufficient semblance of a fact in the case to make it one of those which will always stimulate curiosity.

The King of Scotland lost no time in putting into play this story of the flight of King Richard to his court. The news of it was spread amongst the disaffected in various quarters of England, and the Scots prepared to make a descent on the country under advantage of the internal dissension produced. There were other motives which added piquancy to the enmity of the Scots and English. Robert III. was becoming old and feeble, and the Duke of Albany, his brother, one of the most ambitious and unprincipled men that ever lived, possessed the chief power, and gave every possible encouragement to the English adherents of Richard. On the other hand, Henry, recollecting the taunts of degeneracy which had been cast upon his predecessor because he was of a pacific turn, determined to gratify the taste of the nation for military fame. It suited him in every way, except in a pecuniary point, for he was destitute of funds; but it was calculated to divert men's minds from dwelling on the means by which he had risen to the throne, and gave them one great object of interest and union. The condition of Scotland, torn by powerful factions, and ruled by a weak and ailing king, was favourable to his plans, and an expedition thither was the more grateful to his feelings, as it afforded him a hope of punishing the country which gave refuge to his enemies. He announced his intention to Parliament, but it did not encourage the idea of imposing new taxes. He then called a great council of the peers, spiritual and temporal, and these consented to a partial resort to the ancient feudal system, which had for some time been falling into desuetude, that the barons should assemble their retainers and follow the royal standard at their own cost; while the prelates and dignitaries of the Church should give the king a tenth of their incomes. Henry next summoned all persons possessed of fees, wages, or annuities, granted by Edward III., the Black Prince, Richard II., or the Duke of Lancaster, to meet him at York, under the penalty of forfeiture: and, from the banks of the Tyne, where he arrived in the beginning of August, he dispatched heralds to King Robert and the barons of Scotland, as his vassals, to meet him on the 23rd of that month at Edinburgh, there to do homage and swear fealty to him as the paramount lord of Scotland.

He marched to Leith without opposition, but the castle of Edinburgh was in the hands of David, Duke of Rothesay, the king's eldest son, who sent Henry a contemptuous defiance, offering to do battle with him, with one, two, or three hundred Scottish knights against the same number of English. Henry received the proposal with an equal affectation of contempt, and waited some days for the approach of an army under the Duke of Albany. But he waited in vain, for that astute nobleman took care not to engage a force which famine was fast defeating for him. Provisions became unattainable, and Henry was compelled to retreat to the borders.

The expedition was far from equalling the prestige of those of his predecessors, especially the first and third Edwards, but at the same time it must be allowed that it exceeded them in humanity. Whether the real motive were humanity or policy, it was in effect both. His protection was instantly afforded to all who sought it, and the royal banner displayed from tower or steeple was a signal that no violence or plunder of the inhabitants was permitted. Thus he mitigated the terrors of war, and set an example of moderation to both friend and enemy, such as had hitherto been unknown in European warfare.

Henry was hastily recalled from the borders of Scotland by a formidable revolt in Wales. There a new enemy, and a most troublesome one, had been needlessly provoked by the injustice of a nobleman, Lord Grey de Ruthin. Lord Grey, who had large estates in the marshes of Wales, appropriated a part of the demesne of a Welsh gentleman, Owen ap Griffith Vaughan, commonly called Owen Glendower, or Owen of Glendowerdy. In his youth Owen had studied the law in the inns of court; was called to the bar, but afterwards became an esquire to the Earl of Arundel; and then, during the campaign in Ireland, to Richard II., to whom he was much attached. When Richard was deposed Owen retired to his paternal estate in Wales, where the aggression of Lord Grey took place. Lord Grey was closely connected with the new king; Owen was an adherent of the old one; and this probably encouraged Lord Grey to attempt the injustice. But Owen Vaughan was possessed of the high spirit and quick blood of the Welsh. He disdained to submit to this arrogant oppressor. He petitioned the king in Parliament for redress, but met with the fate which was only too probable from a poor partisan of the fallen king in opposition to the powerful one of the reigning dynasty. Though his cause was ably pleaded by the Bishop of St. Asaph, his petition was rejected, and Owen, who boasted that he was descended from Llewelyn, the last of the ancient Princes of Wales, boldly took his cause into his own hands, and drove Lord Grey by force of arms from his lands. The indignant nobleman appealed to Henry, who embraced his cause, and issued a proclamation at Northampton on the 19th of September, 1400, commanding all men of the nine neighbouring counties to repair instantly to his standard, to march into Wales, and reduce Glendower, who was declared a rebel. The fiery patriot, burning with indignation at this gross injustice, the very day that the news of it reached him, rushed forth, burnt Lord Grey's town of Ruthin, declared himself Prince of Wales, and called on his countrymen to follow him and assert the liberty of their country. The spark was thrown into the magazine of combustible material of which Wales was full, for it was crushed but not contented. The people flocked from all quarters to Owen's standard. They admitted his claims to the princedom of the country without much inquiry, for they saw in him a companion and a deliverer from the English yoke. Owen's superior education in London inspired them with profound respect, and hence their opinion that he was a potent magician, possessing dominion over the elements. Henry marched against him, but Owen retired into the mountains, and the king was compelled to return.

In the next year Henry marched once more against the Welsh, who continued to assemble in still greater bodies under the banner of Owen Glendower, and make inroads into England, plundering and killing wherever they came. Twice in this year Henry took the field against them, but on his approach they retired into their mountains and eluded his pursuit. As regularly as he returned, they again rushed down into the champaign country, and in one of these incursions in Pembrokeshire, Owen gained a considerable victory, thus raising his reputation and augmenting his force.

Wearied by these fruitless attempts to subdue the insurgent Welsh, Henry returned towards the end of the year to London, but found as little repose or satisfaction there. Secret enemies were around him, treason dogged his steps into his very chamber, and he came near to losing his life by means of a sharp instrument of steel, having three long points, which was concealed in his bed.

Meantime the revolt of Owen Glendower had been acquiring strength. Not only did the Welsh, amid their native mountains, flock to his standard, but such of them as were in England left their various employments and hastened back to join in the great efforts for the independence of their country. Not only labourers and artisans, but the apprentices in London and other cities caught the contagion, and went streaming back. The students left the universities, and the Commons at length presented themselves before the king, representing to him how all these various classes of men were hastening to Wales laden with armour, arrows, bows, and swords. Owen took the field early, engaged his original adversary, Lord Grey, defeated and made him prisoner on the banks of the Vurnway. Sir Edmund Mortimer, uncle to the young Earl of March, collected all the friends and vassals of the family to prevent the devastation of their lands. They mustered 12,000, with whom they attacked Glendower near Knighton, in Radnorshire, but were defeated, and Sir Edmund was made prisoner, with a loss of 1,100 of his men. At the same time the young earl himself, who had been allowed by Henry to retire to his castle of Wigmore, though a mere boy, took the field, but was also captured by Glendower, and carried into the mountains.

Henry, who had the strongest reasons for wishing the Mortimers out of his way, we may suppose was by no means displeased at their seizure by Glendower; and this was sufficiently evident, for he refused to allow the Earl of Northumberland, who was closely allied to the Mortimers, to treat for their ransom with Glendower. Still, Henry put forth all his vigour to reduce the Welsh chieftain. He entered Wales at three different points; his son, the Prince of Wales, leading one division of the army, the Earl of Arundel the second, and himself the third. The Prince of Wales pushed into the heart of the mountains with a bravery which was the herald of Agincourt. He reached the very estate of Glendower and burnt down his house, and laid waste his property; but Glendower kept aloof on the hills till he saw young Henry retire, when he poured down like one of his native torrents, and carried desolation in his rear. The English armies found it impossible to come to close quarters with these enemies, and equally impossible to procure provisions. The weather was insupportable. The rains descended in incessant deluges, the tempest tore away the king's tent, and everything appeared to confirm the ideas of the people, and indeed of contemporary historians, that Owen Glendower, by the power of necromancy, could "call spirits from the vasty deep," and bring the elements in league against his foes. Henry was compelled to return baffled from the contest.

The news which reached the king from Scotland was equally extraordinary. It was that King Richard was alive and residing at the Scottish court, and about to invade England at the head of a large army. The king issued repeated proclamations against the propagation of these rumours, and it was now that he put to death Sir Roger Clarendon, the natural son of the Black Prince, nine Franciscan friars, and several other persons, for disseminating this account.

Border warfare was begun on a large scale by Henry's supporters the Percies, and the Scottish nobles retaliated. On one of these occasions, the command being in the hands of Sir Patrick Hepburn of Hailes, the Scots broke into England and laid waste the country with great fury; but going too far, they were intercepted by Percy and the Earl of March, a Scottish refugee, and no connection of Mortimer's, on Nesbit Moor in the Merse. The Scots were only 400 in number, but they were well armed and mounted, and consisted of the flower of the Lothians. The battle was long doubtful, but March, who had not arrived before, coming up with 200 men from the garrison at Berwick, decided the fortune of the day. Hepburn himself was killed, and such was the destruction of his best knights and his followers that the spot still retains the name of Slaughter Hill.

Henry was delighted with the news of this victory. He complimented the Percies and March on their prompt bravery, and commanded them to call out and assemble the feudal levies of the northern counties, as the Scots were menacing the borders on the west, and ravaging the neighbourhood of Carlisle. Henry's information was correct. To revenge the defeat of Nesbit Moor, Lord Archibald Douglas took the field with 10,000 picked men, and the Earl of Albany, who now wielded unlimited power in Scotland, sent his son Murdoch, Earl of Fife, to join him with a strong body of archers and spearmen. The most distinguished knights and barons of Scotland followed the Douglas banner. A nobler army for its numbers never left Scotland under a Douglas. But the present Earl of Douglas was as noted for his lack of caution, and for his numerous consequent defeats, as his ancestors had been for their care and success, so that he had acquired the byname of "the tine-man," the losing man. He rushed on across the Tweed with his accustomed impetuosity, and never stayed his course till he arrived before the gates of Newcastle. Everywhere the country people, unsupported by any armed force, had fled before him, and he and his followers now found themselves so loaded with booty that it was necessary to return.

Secure in their numbers and in the flight of the inhabitants, the Scots pursued their homeward way leisurely, till they arrived near Milfield, not far from Wooler, in Northumberland. But here they found themselves confronted by a strong force under the Earl of Northumberland, his son Hotspur, and the Earl of March. Douglas seized on an excellent position, a hill called Homildon, had he only had cavalry and men-at-arms to contend with; but the forces of the Percies consisted chiefly of archers, and there were many eminences round Homildon which completely commanded it, and whence the English bowmen could shoot down the Scots at pleasure.

The English occupied a strong pass; but perceiving their advantage, and that the Scots had not even taken possession of the eminence opposed to them, they advanced and secured that important ground. Had the Scots taken care to pre-occupy that, they could have charged down on the English archers, if they ventured to leave the pass, and the battle must speedily have been brought to a hand fight, where the Scots, from their vantage ground, could have committed great havoc.

The English, having posted themselves, to their own surprise, on the eminence opposite to the Scots, saw that Douglas had crowded his whole force into one dense column, exposing them to the enemy, and impeding, by their closeness, their own action. Hotspur, at the head of the men-at-arms, proposed to charge the Scots, but March instantly seized his bridle rein, and showed him that he would, by his advance, lose the grand advantage offered them by the oversight of Douglas. He made him aware that the bowmen could speedily level the serried ranks of the Scots without any danger to themselves. The truth of this was at once perceived; the English archers advanced, pouring their arrows in showers upon the Scots, who were so thickly wedged together, and so scantily furnished with armour, having little more on them than a steel cap and a slender jack or breast-plate, or a quilted coat, that the cloth-yard arrows of the English made deadly work amongst them. As the English continued to advance, the best armour of the knights was found incapable of resisting their arrows, while the Scottish archers drew feebler and more uncertain bows, and produced little effect. The confusion among the forces of Douglas became terrible; the bravest knights and barons fell mortally wounded; the horses struck with the arrows reared and plunged, and trod down the riders of their own party. The Galwegians, only half clad, presented, according to the accounts of the time, the appearance of huge hedgehogs, so thickly were they bristled over with the shafts of the enemy.

In this mortal dilemma a brave knight, Sir John Swinton exclaimed, "My friends, why stand we here to be marked down by the enemy, and that like deer in a park? Where is our ancient valour? Shall we stand still, and have our hands nailed to our lances. Follow me, in the name of God; let us break yonder ranks, or die like men."

CHARGE OF THE SCOTS AT HOMILDON HILL. (*See p.* 525.)

On hearing this, Sir Adam Gordon, who had long been at deadly feud with Swinton, threw himself from his horse, entreated his forgiveness, and kneeling, begged the honour of being knighted by his hand. Swinton instantly complied, and the two knights, tenderly embracing each other, mounted and charged down on the enemy, followed by a hundred horsemen. Had the whole body of the Scots followed they might have retrieved the day; but such was the confusion in the Scottish lines, that before Douglas could advance to support them, Swinton and Gordon were slain, and their little band slaughtered or dispersed. When at length Douglas was able to move on, the English archers, keeping perfect order, fell back upon their cavalry, but poured, Parthian-like, showers of arrows behind them on the Scots. The carnage was awful. No defence could withstand the English arrows; and the Earl of Douglas himself, who wore on this fatal day a suit of armour of the most tried temper and exquisite workmanship, which had required three years to manufacture, was wounded in five places, and taken prisoner, together with Murdoch, and the Earls of Moray and Angus. The Scottish army was utterly routed; 1,500 men are said to have perished in attempting to escape across the Tweed; and amongst the slain, besides the chivalric knights Swinton and Gordon, were Sir John Livingston of Callandar, Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie, Sir Roger Gordon, Sir Walter Scott, and Sir William Sinclair.

Such was the bloody battle of Homildon Hill, another of those great victories which the English owed entirely to the matchless superiority of their bows and bowmen; for Walsingham declares that neither earl, knight, nor squire handled their weapons, or came into action; though, when the Scots were broken, they joined in the pursuit.

When Henry received the news of this great victory, achieved on the day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, September 14th, 1402, he instantly dispatched a messenger with letters of congratulation to the Percies and the Earl of March, but commanded them not on any account to admit to ransom any of their prisoners, of any rank whatever, or to suffer them to be upon parole until they received further instructions. The object of this order was plainly to keep Scotland quiet by retaining so many of her bravest leaders in his power; but the peremptory tone of the command, coming in the hour of victory, gave great offence to the commanders. It was a settled and ancient right of the conqueror to ransom his prisoners, and it came with a more sensible effect on the fiery spirit of Hotspur from the recent refusal of Henry to permit him to ransom his brother-in-law, the Earl of March, from Owen Glendower. Henry took care to assure the victors that it was not his intention to deprive ultimately any of his liege subjects of their undoubted rights in regard to their captives; but Henry was not famous for keeping his word in opposition to his interests. The reader will recollect the indignant language put by Shakespeare into the mouth of Hotspur on this occasion, and, notwithstanding the assertion of some writers that the offence really taken by the Percies was not from this cause, we see no reason to doubt the relations of Rymer and other authorities. This second interference of Henry was the deciding cause of that revolt of the Percies, to which they were already disposed, and which immediately followed Homildon Hill fight.

They had been the means of placing Henry on the throne, as it would seem, without intending it, for he had sworn to them on the Gospels at Doncaster that he aimed at nothing more than asserting his own invaded rights. Henry had rewarded them with large grants of land, including those of their prisoner Douglas, which lay in Eskdale, Liddesdale, with Ettrick Forest, and the lordship of Selkirk. The Percies, indeed, might regard these last as scarcely more than nominal gifts, for they would require a powerful force to keep possession of them, and they were almost immediately retaken by the Scots. The Percies, in fact, were ill-pleased with the haughty tone of Henry, who owed them so much, and they were now in close alliance with the Mortimers, who had the real claim to the throne. That Henry received their desire to liberate their royal relative with fear and suspicion was clear from the fact that he made no resistance to the ransom of Lord Grey de Ruthin. Henry did not hesitate to say in reply to Hotspur's pertinacious demands of March's liberty, that he and his uncle Mortimer had gone to Glendower of their own accord, and that no loyal subject would, therefore, wish them back again.

This was pointed language to a mind like Hotspur's. But there were still other causes at work. The Earl of Northumberland attended at Westminster with his prisoner, Murdoch Stewart, the son of Albany, and six other captives. They were presented to Henry, who, though he invited them to dine with him, received them rather coldly, and used severe language to Sir Adam Forster, one of them. The earl pressed Henry for the payment of large sums of money due to him for the custody of the Marches and the costs of the Scottish war. This of all subjects was the most distasteful to Henry, who was always short of money, and reluctant to part with it when he had it. To balance this account, he now gave Northumberland, instead of hard cash, the lands of Douglas, which would require for their defence still more hard blows. Northumberland returned home in no good humour, and the work of revolt now went rapidly on.

The Earl of Worcester, Northumberland's brother, entered into the quarrel regarding the Mortimers. Scrope, the Archbishop of York, the brother of William Scrope, Earl of Wiltshire, who had been put to death by Henry at Bristol, and who, therefore, hated Henry, advised these nobles to depose the usurper, and place the Earl of March, the rightful prince, on the throne. The first open evidence of the insurrection was furnished by Edmund Mortimer, who, to free himself from captivity, gave his daughter in marriage to Owen Glendower, and on his part agreed to join the confederacy for the overthrow of Henry of Lancaster, with 12,000 men.

Meantime, the Percies and the Earl of March had agreed to liberate Douglas, their prisoner, on condition that he should join the enterprise with a certain number of Scottish knights. Accordingly the Percies and March made a foray into Teviotdale, and challenged the chivalry of Scotland, by way of concealing their real enterprise from the eyes of the English king, to meet them in battle on the 1st of August. Keeping up the appearance of an attack on Scotland, they invested an insignificant fortress on the borders, called the Tower of Cocklaws, commanded by a simple esquire, one John Greenlaw. This petty border hold was besieged with all the forms of war by this powerful army. It was assaulted by the archers, and battered by the trebuchets and mangonels, but still it stood firm, and its commander at length entered into a treaty with Hotspur, promising to surrender it in six weeks, that is, on the aforesaid 1st of August, if not sooner relieved by the King of Scotland, or Albany, the governor. This made it necessary to send a courier to Edinburgh, ostensibly to communicate this agreement to the Government, but really under cover of it to open a negotiation with Albany for his adhesion to the enterprise. The utmost publicity was given by the Percies to the expected *rencontre* between the nations on the 1st of August. They applied in all directions for aid and troops from their friends, and carried the deception so far as to even solicit Henry for arrears of money due to them, amounting to £20,000, in order to enable them to maintain the honour of the nation.

Henry must have lost much of his usual sagacity if he had not for some time seen through this solemn farce. The black clouds of the coming tempest had been drawing together from various quarters for some time, and dull must have been the vision of the Government had they not attracted their notice. Henry sent no money, but ominously avowed his intention of joining his faithful Percies in person, and sharing their dangers for their common country. This appears to have startled the covert insurgents. They at once altered the tone of their pretensions. They abruptly abandoned the anticipated glories of their Scottish campaign, and directing their course towards Wales, gave out that they were about to make war on Owen Glendower, in defence of King Henry.

Henry of Lancaster was by no means deceived. He knew that Mortimer had allied himself to Glendower, and publicly proclaimed his intention to maintain the cause of his nephew, the Earl of March against Henry. Still more, the Scottish Earl of March, refusing to participate in the treasonable designs of the Percies, from his mortal hatred to Douglas, whom they had made an associate, hastened to Henry, and fully apprised him of the real situation of affairs. Henry, therefore, lost no time in marching northward; but this movement quickened that of Hotspur.

It has been said that if this conspiracy had been executed with as much prudence as it was planned, it would have cost Henry his crown; and the cause of failure has been laid on the precipitancy of Hotspur and the timidity of his father. But it must be borne in mind that Henry was a suspicious and vigilant monarch, constantly in danger, and, therefore, constantly on the alert to detect it. Fortune, Providence, or his singular circumspection, served him uniformly in all these conspiracies, and enabled him to defeat his adversaries. It must also be borne in mind that to arrange a sufficient military force to overturn the throne of a monarch like Henry, it required extended ramifications of conspiracy; and this involved the imminent danger of bringing into the field of operation some individuals hostile or traitorous to the enterprise. On this occasion the Percies had announced their object to the Governments of France and Scotland, and the defiances arriving from the Duke of Orleans and the Count of St. Pol seem to have originated from this cause. But if they did not awake suspicion in the breast of Henry, there was the Scottish Earl of March, as there had been the traitorous Earl of Rutland before, to prove a stumbling-block to the conspirators. It was almost impossible to avoid making him a confidant, and if made, he was pretty sure to damage them through his hatred to Douglas.

At the critical moment when Henry had clearly obtained intelligence of what was going forward, Albany, who was raising all Scotland, and proposing to bring down 50,000 men to join them, had not had time to complete his muster. The old Earl of Northumberland fell ill, or, as some historians will have it, grew afraid, and could not march. It was, therefore, no precipitancy, but an inexorable necessity, which compelled Hotspur to use all diligence to effect a junction with Owen Glendower, before overtaken by Henry. He was accompanied by Douglas and his Scottish knights; and by his uncle, the Earl of Worcester, the lieutenant of South Wales, with what forces he could get together. The men of Chester always devoted to King Richard, joined them on the march to support his cause, for they heard that he was still alive. The whole insurgent army amounted to 14,000 men, and even though disappointed of the contingents of the Scottish regent and the old Earl of Northumberland, if they could reach the army of Glendower they would present a most formidable force.

But in this Henry was too quick for them. He himself, knowing the valour of the troops and the leaders who came against him, was desirous to delay awhile an actual conflict with them; but the Scottish Earl of March, who seems to have been an admirable tactician, as he had seen the true mode of action at Homildon, saw it in this case, and urged vehemently on Henry the necessity of checking the Percies before they could form a junction with Glendower. Henry saw the wisdom of the advice; he had now reached Burton-upon-Trent, and turning west, he pushed forward by forced marches, and entered Shrewsbury at the same moment that the advanced guard of Percy and Douglas was seen in all haste endeavouring to gain that city.

Hotspur and Douglas, failing in their intent to secure entrance into the town, drew off their forces to Hateley Field, within a short distance of the city, where they pitched their camp. From this camp the confederates sent to the king a defiance, which has been preserved by Hardyng, who was in the service of Hotspur, and the next day accompanied him to the battle. In this they accused Henry of being false and perjured, inasmuch as he had sworn at Doncaster on the holy Gospels that he would claim nothing but the property of himself and his wife; yet he had deposed, imprisoned, and murdered Richard the king. Moreover, not only had he destroyed Richard, but he had usurped the right of the Earl of March, and had violated the laws and constitution in various ways; for which reason they pronounced him a perjured traitor, and were determined to assert the cause of the rightful heir. Henry replied that he had no time to waste in writing; but the next morning the 21st of July, the vigil of St. Mary Magdalene, drew his forces out of the city, and put them in order of battle. When this was accomplished he appeared struck with some doubts of the result of the battle, for the forces were equal in number, and the opponents tried and strong warriors. He therefore sent the Abbot of Shrewsbury to the hostile camp with offers of peace, which, after long deliberation, were rejected by the advice of the Earl of Worcester, who bade them not hope to escape the vengeance of Henry if they consented to put themselves again into his power.

On receiving this answer Henry cried, "Then, banners, advance!" and the cries of "St. George!" and "Espérance, Percy;" rent the air. It was a pitiful sight to see so fine an army of Englishmen drawn up against each other for mutual destruction; and at the very first discharge the archers on both sides made a fearful slaughter. Every passion and motive was called into action which could lead to a desperate conflict. Never were there two more equally balanced armies. Each was about 14,000 strong. Hardyng, who, as we have said, was present, states Hotspur's force at 9,000 knights, yeomen, and archers, "withouten raskaldry," that is, common hired soldiers. The leaders on both sides were the bravest men and most distinguished captains of the age, tried in many a hard-fought field. Their followers were the flower of the English and Scottish armies. Here were not the renowned English archers on one, but on both sides; and these supported by such a body of gentlemen and the substantial yeomanry of the country as had rarely been assembled in so moderately-sized a host. On the one side, the king and his son fought for crown, life, and reputation. If they were conquered, there was nothing for them short of loss of the crown, of existence, and of reputation; for they must go down to posterity as usurpers who had deluged their country with blood for their criminal ambition. For Hotspur, on the other hand, it was either victory and the establishment of a close alliance with the old hereditary line, in the person of the new King of England, or execution, if taken; or, if he escaped, eternal banishment, and the ruin of his noble house and of all his kindred and adherents. Therefore every man and pre-eminently the leaders, put forth all their force, and fought with the most lion-like desperation. According to Walsingham, the insurgents gave out that Richard himself was alive, and with them in the field to assist in avenging his own injuries.

Percy and Douglas, who had so often fought in opposition, now rushed on side by side, like two young lions, beating and bearing down all before them. Everywhere they sought out the king, determined to take him, alive or dead. But again the cunning Scottish Earl of March, who seemed to think of everything, had advised the king to take the armour of a simple captain, and to dress up several captains in the royal garb. The ruse succeeded admirably for the king, but fatally for his representatives. Douglas and Hotspur raged everywhere. They broke through the English ranks with thirty picked followers, and wherever they saw a royally dressed and mounted champion they attacked and slew him. Douglas, who as well as Hotspur is described as performing prodigies of valour, is said to have killed three of the sham kings with his own hand. When at length they approached the real king, he exclaimed in astonishment, "Where the devil do all these kings come from?" The two brave generals attacked Henry himself with the same fury with which they had assaulted those who resembled him. They came so near to him that they slew Sir Walter Blount, the standard-bearer, threw down the standard, killed the Earl of Stafford and two other knights, and were within a few yards of Henry, when his good genius, the Scottish Earl of March, rushed forward and entreated him, if he valued his life, to keep somewhat more aback.

WARKWORTH CASTLE.

The battle now raged here portentously, and knights and gentlemen fell promiscuously on all sides. For three hours the struggle and carnage went on, every one fighting, Scot against Scot, Englishman against Englishman, with the fury of demons; the archers all the while pouring in their showers of arrows on their opponents, so that, as Walsingham says, "the dead lay thick as leaves in autumn;" and so encumbered were the ranks, that there was scarcely any advancing over them. Still, everywhere the forces of Percy and Douglas were carrying the day; yet, at length, Henry's fortune once more prevailed. He had fought everywhere with a gallantry not surpassed by any man in the field. When unhorsed he was rescued by the Prince of Wales, who, though wounded early in the battle with an arrow in the face, fought through it with the most distinguished bravery, giving full promise of his future martial fame. But Hotspur and Douglas, finding that the ranks of the royal army through which they had broken had closed after them, endeavoured at length to cut their way back to their own troops. In this, however, they were not easily successful. The battle was in its full fury, every man fought like a hero, and they found themselves assailed on all sides by the points of spears, swords, and flights of arrows. In the heat of the *mêlée*, Hotspur, nearly suffocated in his armour from his prodigious exertions, for an instant raised his visor for air. That instant an arrow struck him in the face, passed through his brain, and he fell dead on the field.

At this sight, which was beheld by both armies, the royal ranks set up the jubilant shout of "St. George and Victory!" The Scots and Percy's forces gave way, and the flight and pursuing massacre became general. The Scots were almost entirely cut to pieces. Douglas, in endeavouring to escape, fell over a precipice; or, as others say, his horse stumbled in ascending a hill, he was thrown, severely injured, and taken.

The numbers of killed and wounded in this terrific action are said to have been 5,000 on the side of the king, and a much greater number on that of the insurgents. Otterburne says that nearly 2,300 gentlemen fell, and about 6,000 private men, of whom two-thirds were of the insurgent army. The most distinguished persons who perished on the royal side were the Earl of Stafford, Sir Walter Blount, Sir Hugh Shirley, Sir Hugh Mortimer, Sir John Massey, and Sir John Calverley. Besides Hotspur and Sir Robert Stuart being killed, the uncle of Hotspur, the Earl of Worcester, the Baron of Kinderton, and Sir Richard Vernon were taken prisoners. Douglas was treated by Henry with the courtesy due to his rank and reputation, and as a foreign enemy, not as a rebel; but Worcester, Kinderton, and Vernon were immediately beheaded.

The rapidity with which Henry had broken in upon the plans of the insurgents had prevented one of the most formidable coalitions imaginable. The Duke of Albany in Scotland had assembled 50,000 men, and advanced to join Hotspur at the tower of Cocklaws; but on arriving there he found Percy and his army gone thence; and, soon after hearing that he was defeated and slain at Shrewsbury, he gave out that his expedition had only been intended to drive that nobleman from Scotland, and returned quietly to Edinburgh.

The Earl of Northumberland, recovering from his illness, was far advanced in his march with a considerable body of men to join the main army, when he was met by the intelligence of the defeat and death of his son, and his brother, the Earl of Worcester. Completely dejected by this calamitous news, he disbanded his little army, and retired to his castle of Warkworth. Owen Glendower, from some cause, never appeared.

No sooner was this destructive battle over than Henry marched northward to disperse any remains of disaffection or armed force. He acted with consummate policy, prohibiting his troops from plundering, and offering pardon to all concerned in the late rebellion who laid down their arms. The Earl of Northumberland hastened to avail himself of this lenity, and presented himself before Henry at York, who received him as might be expected, with evident displeasure and reproaches for the perfidy of his conduct. It is said that the old earl was mean enough to declare that he never intended any disloyalty, but was marching his troops to join the royal army—a circumstance which, if true, would induce us to believe all that writers of the time have insinuated of the dubious character of the indisposition which prevented him from appearing at the moment of action. Henry seems to have received his miserable plea with deserved contempt, and he retained him in honourable custody for judgment by the approaching Parliament. He then proceeded to issue orders for the arrest of the Lady Elizabeth, the widow of Hotspur, and compelled the knights of Northumberland to swear fealty to him.

When Parliament assembled, Northumberland presented his petition to the king, acknowledging his assembling his retainers, but pleading Henry's promise of pardon at York, on condition of his surrender. The king referred the decision of his case to the judges, but the lords claimed it as their right to try their brother peer; and many of them having been more or less involved in the recent league with him, they pronounced him not guilty of treason or felony, but only of trespasses, for which they adjudged him bound to pay a fine at the king's pleasure. He then swore fealty to Henry, to the Prince of Wales, and to the other sons of the king and their issue, whereupon Henry granted him his pardon, and in a few months restored him to his lands and honours, with the exception of the Isle of Man, the governorship of Berwick, and some other fortresses.

Henry had thus quelled this dangerous rebellion with great spirit and address, but he was still surrounded by dangers; he still found himself pursued by all the evils and annoyances of a usurper. The French friends and families of the slain insurgents were full of animosity; the country complained of the weight of taxes imposed to put down these continual disturbances, the direct consequences of Henry's arbitrary seizure of the crown; and his enemies abroad were insulting the country, and plundering its coasts in revenge of his offences.

The French attacked Guienne, and plundered every English ship and every part of the English coasts that they could approach. They captured a whole fleet of merchantmen; they attacked and took Jersey and Guernsey; they made a descent on Plymouth, burnt it, and laid waste the whole neighbourhood. The Count of St. Pol cruised along our coasts with a squadron of ships, landed on the Isle of Wight, and inflicted severe injuries on the inhabitants before he was repulsed. The admiral of Brittany scoured our coasts and the narrow seas, and carried off no less than fifty prizes, and nearly 2,000 prisoners. No less than three princes of the House of Bourbon were engaged in thus discharging on the people of England their vengeance for the crimes of their king.

Henry granted letters of marque to make reprisals, and the inhabitants of the English seaports associated and carried on a vigorous maritime warfare. They retaliated on the French, ravaged their coasts, burnt their towns, and often even penetrated into the interior. The Flemings and men of Ostend, instigated by the Duke of Orleans and St. Pol, joined with the French in this piratical persecution of the English; and Henry sent out his second son, Thomas, afterwards Duke of Clarence, with a fleet, who committed great havoc on their coasts, destroying ships, people, and towns, without mercy.

To relieve the pressure of his wants, he made an attempt, through the Commons, to resume the grants of the Crown, and to appropriate some of the property of the Church; which resulted in nothing but exasperation of the minds of both laity and clergy. The widow of the Lord Spenser, who had been executed at Bristol, formed a scheme to liberate from Henry's custody the young Earl of March and his brother. She reached their apartments at Windsor by means of false keys, succeeded in getting them safely out of the castle, and was on her way with them towards Wales, where their uncle Mortimer was in close alliance with Glendower. But the vigilance of Henry was quickly aroused; the fugitives were pursued and captured. Lady Spenser, on being interrogated by the council, avowed that her brother, the Duke of York, the notorious Rutland, who betrayed everybody, and who had now succeeded his father in his title and estates, was at the bottom of the scheme. York was immediately arrested; but he protested his entire innocence, and, after a few months' confinement in the castle of Pevensey, he was released and restored to the full enjoyment of his rank and property.

In the meanwhile Robert, King of Scotland—crushed by the murder of his eldest son, the Duke of Rothesay, who had been starved to death by the orders of the Earl of Albany, and trembling for the fate of his second son, James, Earl of Carrick, a boy of only fourteen years—was too enfeebled by age and adversity to be able to contend with the wicked Albany, or find any means of security for his son at home, where that nobleman held unlimited sway. He therefore agreed to place him in charge of the King of France, and the young prince, accompanied by the Earl of Orkney, and a strong body of the barons of the Lothians, proceeded to North Berwick, and embarked in a ship which awaited him at the Bass. The Earl of Orkney and a small personal suite alone accompanied him on the voyage, and as the truce was still existing with England, they had no apprehensions from that quarter. But they were already watched by the sleepless eyes of Henry of Lancaster, and when the vessel was off Flamborough Head, they were captured by an armed merchantman of Wye, and carried to London.

The Earl of Orkney presented a letter to Henry, written by Robert of Scotland, entreating him, should his son be compelled by stress of weather to put into an English port, to show him kindness. The earl added, that the young prince was on his way to France for the purpose of his education, and prayed that they might be permitted to pursue their way in peace and security. But Henry had not planned their capture on trivial grounds, and was not, therefore, to be persuaded to give up his prize by mere words. His interest was his paramount principle, and with that he rarely suffered feelings of justice or a sense of honour to interfere. The seizure of the son of a neighbouring king, at entire peace with him, was as gross a breach of the laws of nations as could be conceived; but then Henry had by it obtained a pledge of good behaviour on the part of Scotland. He had now the heir-apparent in his hands, and could employ that advantage in counteraction of the use made by Scotland of the pretended King Richard. Henry, therefore, merely replied to the entreaties of the attendants of the Scottish prince, that he would be perfectly safe with him; and that as to his education, he spoke French as well as the King of France or the Duke of Orleans; and that his father, in fact, could not have sent him to a better master. James and his suite were consigned to the safe keeping of the Tower. That nothing could be more agreeable to the Duke of Albany than to have the heir to the throne safely secured at a distance, was apparent to all the world, as it would leave him, in case of the king's death, regent, and king in all but name. So much was this felt, that many did not hesitate to declare the whole affair to have been planned between Albany and Henry; and the feeble public remonstrances of Albany confirmed this belief. Douglas, on the other hand, who would fain have had the young prince in his hands as a means of gratifying his own lust of power, and of curbing that of Albany, was so enraged at the conveyance of the Earl of Carrick out of the kingdom, that his son, James Douglas of Abercorn, attacked the party of nobles who had accompanied the prince, on their return from North Berwick, and at the moor of Lang-Hermandston slew Sir David Fleming, and took most of the other nobles prisoners. This disastrous termination of the scheme which Robert of Scotland had devised for the safety of his son, hastened his death, which took place in 1406, and Albany was appointed regent during the absence of the young prince, which he was not, therefore, likely to cut short by any strenuous exertions of his own.

SHILLING OF HENRY IV.

It might have been expected that Henry's decisive suppression of the Percy insurrection would have procured him some considerable interval of peace; but this was by no means the case. The Percies were on fire with resentment, and resolved to take revenge for their humiliation and the deaths of Hotspur and Worcester on the very first opportunity. The Earl of Nottingham, son of the Duke of Norfolk, and Scrope, the Archbishop of York, though they had remained passive while Hotspur was in the field, now did their best to fan the flame of revolt in the heart of the old earl, who had been compelled at the time of his pardon to sign an obligation to surrender into the hands of the king the castles of Berwick and Jedburgh, and was deprived of the offices of constable and warden of the marches.

Henry had called a Parliament at St. Albans, but found in it a spirit very uncompliant with his demands. Foremost in opposition and in denouncing the measures of the king was Lord Bardolf. He soon found it safest to absent himself from court, and he therefore hastened north to the Earl of Northumberland, and added his overflowing discontent to that which was already effervescing in the bosoms of the earl and of his partisans. The insurgents took the field, but, as in all their attempts during this reign, without any concert. First appeared in arms Sir John Falconberg and three other knights in Cleveland, in May of 1405. They were immediately assaulted and dispersed by Prince John, the third son of King Henry, and the Earl of Westmoreland. Then the Archbishop of York and the Earl of Nottingham, more commonly called the Earl Mowbray (who also was Earl Marshal) with unexampled rashness appeared in arms without waiting for the forces of the Earl of Northumberland. They fixed on the doors of the churches in York and other places a defiance of the king, charging him with the same crimes and misdemeanours which were contained in the proclamation of Shrewsbury—perjury, usurpation, murder, extortion, and the like. They assembled 8,000 men at Skipton-on-the-

Moor. The Prince and Earl of Westmoreland having defeated Falconberg's force, marched against them, and came up with them in the forest of Galtres on the 29th of May.

Finding that the forces of the insurgents exceeded their own, the Earl of Westmoreland proposed a friendly conference, which was acceded to. There the earl acted with an art not more remarkable than the simplicity of those on whom it was practised. The archbishop presented a list of grievances, which Westmoreland read and declared to be perfectly reasonable, and presenting, in his opinion, no difficulties but such as might readily be got over. The matters in dispute were discussed. Westmoreland astutely approved of all that they suggested, conceded all their demands, and solemnly swore to procure the royal ratification of every condition.

Having thus amicably terminated their differences, the earl called for wine, which the negotiators partook of in sight of both armies. While they were thus drinking and embracing, the earl pleasantly suggested that, as they were now friends, there could be no necessity for keeping their armies assembled, and proposed that they should disband them all on the spot, let them know that peace was concluded, and allow every man to go home.

To this the Earl Mowbray made some objection; but the archbishop, who was sincerity and simplicity embodied, overruled his caution, and gave orders for the dismissal of their troops. No sooner was this done, and the army of the insurgents dispersing on all sides in confusion, than it was seen that the soldiers of the Crown remained stationary, having been duly instructed

THE FRENCH FLEET ARRIVING AT MILFORD HAVEN. (*See p.* 535.)

beforehand; and Westmoreland, throwing off the mask, arrested the archbishop, the Earl Marshal, and the other leaders who had come to the conference. This news reaching the insurgents, every one made the best of his way in flight for his own safety.

Henry was already on his way to support his son and Westmoreland. He had already arrived at Pontefract, and at that spot, so suggestive of his unrelenting disposition, the insurgent leaders, thus perfidiously entrapped, were brought before him. He ordered them to follow him to Bishopthorpe, the palace of the primate, near York; as if, with a refinement of cruelty, he would make the fate which he designed for him the more bitter by inflicting it on the spot of his past greatness and authority. There he commanded the chief justice, Gascoigne, to pronounce on them sentence of death; but that upright and inflexible judge refused, declaring that he had no jurisdiction over either archbishop or earl, who must be tried by their peers. Sir William Fulthorpe was appointed on the spot Chief Justice of the King's Bench for the occasion; and this pliant tool, no doubt selected with full knowledge of his obsequious nature, called them at once before him, and, without any form of law, indictment, trial, or jury, condemned them to be beheaded as traitors; and the sentence was carried instantly into execution, with many circumstances of wanton and unworthy cruelty.

This was the first time that a prelate had suffered capital punishment in England. Prelates had been imprisoned and punished by forfeiture and banishment, but no king had yet dared to put to death a bishop; and the circumstance did not pass without the Pope launching the thunders of excommunication against all persons concerned in this ominous innovation, though without specially naming the king. The archbishop, on hearing his sentence, protested that he never intended any evil to the person of Henry, and merely sought redress of grievances; but after having twice incited the insurgents to arms, and being believed to have written the last proclamation, if not that also at Shrewsbury, he was not likely to obtain credence. When afterwards the king called upon the House of Lords to record a judgment of high treason against the archbishop and the Earl Marshal, they demurred, and required the question to lie over till the next Parliament—a significant hint of their disapproval, which Henry was wise enough to take. The matter was never mentioned again.

Henry punished the city of York for its disposition to support the views of the archbishop, by depriving it of its franchises, and then, at the head of 37,000 men, marched in pursuit of the Earl of Northumberland and Bardolf. Northumberland had delayed his demonstration this time to secure the assistance of Albany, the regent of Scotland, and aid from France. He had readily formed an alliance with Albany, but failed in procuring any support from the French court. As Henry advanced north, Northumberland retired. Henry took successive possession of the duke's castles of Prudhoe, Warkworth, and Alnwick; and as he drew near Berwick, Northumberland, who never showed much courage, surrendered it into the hands of the Scots, and fell back still farther on his Scottish allies. The Scots themselves, not thinking the town tenable against Henry's forces, set it on fire and deserted it. The castle alone appeared disposed to make resistance; but the shot of an enormous cannon having shattered one of the towers, it opened its gates, and the son of the Baron of Graystock, with the six principal officers, was immediately executed. Henry turned southward victorious, and at Pontefract—which no thoughts of the murder he was charged with committing prevented him from visiting—he conferred upon his queen the several great estates of the Earl of Northumberland and Bardolf.

Henry now marched to Wales, whither he had sent his son, Prince Henry, in the spring. This gallant young prince, who had acquired such renown on the field of Shrewsbury, had pursued Glendower into his fortresses, with all the ardour and impetuosity of youth. For some time that artful general eluded his attacks, and set him at defiance by a variety of stratagems, but in the month of March he had obtained a signal victory over the Welsh at Grosmont, in Monmouthshire, and taken Griffith, the son of Glendower, who commanded, prisoner. He next laid siege to Lampeter Castle, in Cardiganshire, and after a long siege reduced it. But now the French appeared upon the scene with a force of 12,000 men, if we are to credit Otterburne.

Glendower, finding his power gradually undermined by the efforts of Henry and his valiant son, had applied to the French, or, as some writers assert, had gone in person to solicit the aid of France. That country at the time was in a deplorable state of misgovernment. The malady of Charles VI. had reduced him to a condition of absolute imbecility. The powerful Duke of

Burgundy was dead, and the dissolute Orleans, living in open adultery with the queen, had usurped the whole powers of the state. As Albany was in Scotland, so was Orleans in France. Hating Henry with an inveterate hatred, he readily promised Glendower his assistance. A fleet was fitted out and entrusted to the Count of La Marche, a gay young prince of the royal family, but engrossed in pleasures and gaieties. It was so late in the year when this courtly admiral reached his fleet at Brest, that his most sensible followers refused to venture to sea; and with a fragment of his force La Marche made an abortive descent on the English coast at Falmouth.

In the spring of 1405, however, a fresh fleet, assembled by the resolute Orleans, reached Wales, and debarked at Milford Haven. The fleet consisted of 120 ships, and had taken on board a great number of cavalry horses, which, however, had nearly all perished during the stormy passage; and no sooner was the fleet moored than the squadron of the Cinque Ports sailed in after it, and burnt fifteen ships. It, moreover, cut off all supplies by sea, and soon after succeeded in capturing a portion of the French transports bringing ammunition and provisions.

The French army was commanded by the Count Montmorency, Marshal de Rieux, and the Sire de Hugueville, grand master of the arbalisters (or crossbowmen). They marched to Haverfordwest, and burnt the town, but suffered great loss in attempting to take the castle, and were repulsed. They next advanced to Carmarthen, laying the country waste as they went; they took Carmarthen, and there were joined by Owen Glendower with a force of 10,000 men. This united force took its way towards England, and Prince Henry, being in possession of an inferior force, was compelled to avoid an engagement.

It was this which had made Henry hasten his march from the north. Before setting out, he granted the Isle of Man, forfeited by the Earl of Northumberland, to Sir John Stanley, in whose family it continued till the reign of Elizabeth. On reaching Hereford the king was compelled to issue a proclamation representing that the kingdom was in great danger from the junction of the French and the Welsh; that his finances were totally exhausted; and that the tenths and fifteenths granted by Parliament could not be levied till Martinmas. He, therefore, commanded the sheriffs of all the neighbouring counties to summon before them the richest men of their several shires, and prevail upon them to advance money on the credit of the taxes already voted.

To such extremity was Henry IV. reduced, in one of the most critical epochs of his troubled reign; and this total want of means for paying and feeding his army delayed him so long, that it was not till late in the year that he came face to face with the invaders. They had now reached the very gates of Worcester, and menaced that town. Henry having united his forces with those of his son, now advanced upon the enemy, who were posted on a considerable hill, and took up his position on an opposite height For eight days the two armies lay with a deep valley between them, neither of them willing to risk the loss of its vantage ground, and give battle under the unequal circumstances. There were occasional skirmishes, and three of the French lords were slain, including the brother of the marshal.

At length the Welsh and French beat a retreat into Wales, and Henry pursued them; but having reached their marshes and mountains, they turned upon the king's forces when they had, in their ardour, advanced incautiously amongst them, and inflicted great loss upon them, taking or destroying fifty of his wagons, containing the most valuable portion of his baggage. It was now the middle of October; the season was such as all the world then believed to be at the command of Glendower—tempestuous and incessantly raining. The roads became impassable, provisions were unattainable, and the king was heartily glad to draw off his army. Nor were the French less delighted to quit the country of the great necromancer, where they reaped more labours than laurels; and soon after they embarked and sailed back to France.

Northumberland and Bardolf were soon compelled by the manœuvres of Henry to escape from Scotland. The Scottish noblemen who had been kept prisoners in England ever since the battles of Homildon Hill and Shrewsbury, were offered by Henry their liberty if they would persuade their friends in Scotland to seize and deliver up these noblemen. This disgraceful scheme was readily adopted by the Scottish prisoners and their friends, and would have been carried speedily into execution; but the news of it reached the ears of the brave Sir David Fleming, a staunch friend of the Percies. It must be remembered that not only was the Earl of Douglas, but Murdoch, the son of the regent Albany, still amongst the prisoners of war in England; and, therefore, both Albany and the friends of Douglas, combining the most powerful party in Scotland, were engaged in this most dishonourable conspiracy for the betrayal of Northumberland, his young grandson, Henry Lord Percy, and Lord Bardolf. Sir David Fleming, disdaining to connive at so base a treason against the honour and hospitality of Scotland, gave the English noblemen timely warning. They escaped; but Sir David, as we have related, returning from conducting Prince James to North Berwick on his way to France, was set upon by the son of Douglas and the connections of the other prisoners in England, and lost his life for his noble conduct. Northumberland and Bardolf made their escape to Glendower in Wales.

The situation of Henry at this epoch was far from enviable. His usurpation had involved himself and the nation in constant feuds, battles, treasons, and bloodshed. The best and ablest men, instead of being able to unite their counsels and their efforts for the common good of the country, were inflamed by violent antipathies against each other. The lives of many of the noblest were sacrificed, and the resources of the country consumed in mutual destruction. Henry, indeed, by his skill, address, and courage, had defeated all the schemes formed for his dethronement, and dispersed his assailants, but he was still surrounded by malcontents and general dissatisfaction. All his efforts had not been able to extinguish the reports of the existence of King Richard. As often as these reports were exposed and made ridiculous, as certainly did they revive and renew their strength. The remonstrances of Parliament were severe to an extraordinary degree against his exactions and maladministration. According to the Parliamentary history, the Speaker of the House of Commons, Sir John Tivetot, in a speech addressed to the king, declared that the country was impoverished by excessive impositions, and that nothing was done for its benefit; that in Guienne ninety-six towns and castles were lost, though it had cost this nation great expenditure to defend it; and that the whole of our Continental possessions were in danger; that the marches, *i.e.*, the Scottish borders were in the worst condition; that the rebellion in Wales, notwithstanding every effort, was still unsuppressed; that Ireland was nearly lost, though the charges for its government continued; that at sea our trade was destroyed, and the vessels of our merchants intercepted; and that the expenses of the royal household were excessive, and the court filled with "a set of worthless rascals."

Henry had left his son to continue the campaign in Wales, and he himself endeavoured to manage the domestic concerns of the kingdom; but in addition to the calamities of war, and the difficulties just enumerated, which were chiefly the consequence of them, there now appeared the plague, which ravaged both town and country for several years. In London alone it carried off no less than 30,000 people; and in other places it extirpated whole families, and left entire houses and almost villages empty.

Encouraged by Henry's domestic difficulties, and the strong opposition manifested by Parliament, the Earl of Northumberland and Lord Bardolf, having vainly waited for any decisive support from Owen Glendower, who indeed was now gradually sinking beneath the vigorous efforts of Prince Henry, determined to make one more descent on England. Northumberland had tried in vain to induce Albany to embrace his cause. He had then gone over to France, and thence to Flanders with equally little success. His last hope was placed on the co-operation of the exiled nobles and knights in Scotland, and the disaffected on the Borders and in Northumberland. Correspondence was opened with Sir Thomas Rokeby, sheriff of Yorkshire, and that gentleman is said, by Buchanan, to have lured them on in order to make their defeat certain. They advanced from Scotland into Northumberland, surprised several castles, and raised the Percy tenantry, who were attached to the old chief. Hence they marched on into Yorkshire, and having reached Knaresborough, were joined by Sir Nicholas Tempest. They crossed the Wharfe at Wetherby, and Sir Thomas Rokeby, who appears to have allowed them uninterrupted progress hitherto, that he might effectually cut off their retreat, now following them closely, overtook them on Bramham Moor, near Tadcaster, and brought them to an engagement. The Earl of Northumberland was killed in the battle, Lord Bardolf was taken prisoner, but died in a few days of his wounds. Thus did the old Percy of Northumberland, after a long and hard contest to put down the man he had helped to set up, close his stormy career on the 28th of February, 1408, as his son Hotspur had done five years before at Shrewsbury. The bodies of the earl and of Lord Bardolf were cut in quarters, and sent to London and other towns, where they were exposed.

Henry was in full march to encounter the insurgents when he was met by the pleasing intelligence of their defeat and death. He proceeded

THE DUKES OF ORLEANS AND BURGUNDY AT THE CHURCH OF THE AUGUSTINES. (*See* p. 539.)

to Pontefract, where he continued for a month, busily employed in punishing and fining the prisoners of rank or substance who had been taken at the battle. He was in pressing need of money, and he coined as much out of ransoms as possible. The Abbot of Hayles, having taken arms, was executed like a layman, as the Archbishop of York had been before.

There remained now, of all Henry's enemies within the kingdom, only the Welsh to subdue. The contest between Owen Glendower and Prince Henry had now been going on for upwards of four years, with every demonstration of art, activity, and bravery with which two such commanders could conduct a difficult contest amongst mountains and marshes. Glendower, one of the most devoted patriots and most spirited and able generals that are to be found in history, had disputed every inch of ground with unconquerable pugnacity, and never-exhausted stratagem. He may be said to have taught Henry of Monmouth that discipline and military science which afterwards enabled him to win the battle of Agincourt, and achieve such brilliant triumphs in France. But Henry, full of youth and martial ardour, and supported from England by troops and provisions, was an antagonist who was sure, in time, to bear down the limited means of Glendower. During nearly five years he had completely reduced South Wales, and was slowly but steadily advancing in the north.

In the summer of 1409, Glendower, finding his indefatigable young enemy steadily advancing upon him, and the support of the disheartened and plundered people growing weaker, determined to make one desperate effort to supply himself with provisions, and to inflict a severe punishment, even if it were the last, upon the foe. He therefore sent all the forces he could muster, under the command of his two bravest officers, to make a grand foray in Shropshire. These commanders executed their commission with great bravery and ferocity; but they were at length defeated, their troops cut to pieces, and themselves taken prisoners, carried to London, and there executed.

This was the last expiring effort of the Welsh in that glorious struggle which they had maintained for ten years under their illustrious countryman, Owen ap Griffith Vaughan, better known as the unconquerable Owen Glendower. We say unconquerable, for though Wales—a small country, engaged in an unequal contest with a far greater and wealthier nation, and with two of the most renowned generals of the age, Henry of Lancaster and his son—was compelled to yield, it is very clear, from abundant historic facts, that Owen himself never retired from the struggle, never was subdued. In the Rolls of Parliament, and in Rymer's "Fœdera," we find that in 1411 he was excepted by Henry in a general amnesty; in 1412 he was on foot, and made prisoner; in 1415, just before the battle of Agincourt, Henry V., his old antagonist, who seems to have respected him as he deserved, commissioned Sir Gilbert Talbot to treat with Meredith, the son of Glendower, for a pacification of his father, and his still unconquered associates; and again, shortly after the great triumph of Agincourt, Henry renewed the honourable overture. But Glendower was resolved to live and die free, a prince, without subjects or country, rather than the subject of the conqueror of Wales. He still continued to haunt the wilds and mountains of Snowdon; and, if we may believe one tradition, died peaceably at his daughter's house at Monington, in 1415, while another shows us his burial-place beneath the great window of the south aisle in Bangor Cathedral. Both accounts may very well be true; but, wherever Owen Glendower rests, there rests the dust of a man who only wanted a wider field and a more numerous people to have become the saviour, as he was the true hero, of his country.

The nine years which Henry had now been on the throne had been years of constant insurrections, bloodshed in battle, and bloodshed on the block. He had put down all his internal enemies, and, save some occasional struggles with the remaining power of Glendower in the marshes of Wales, the kingdom was at peace with itself, and continued so during the few remaining years of this reign.

At sea there were still attacks from the French, though that Government disclaimed them, and pretended to maintain the truce between the two countries. That truce, however, had been badly preserved in regard to the English provinces in France. In 1406 the Constable of France and the Count of Armagnac had made extensive inroads on Guienne and Saintonge. According to the complaint of Sir John Tivetot, the Speaker of the House of Commons, they had taken ninety-six towns and castles there. Nothing, indeed, but the miserable and distracted condition of France could have prevented them from taking the whole and driving the English totally out of that kingdom; for Henry, perpetually occupied in battling with his own insurgent subjects, had neither money, men, nor time to devote to his French provinces. The most pitiable entreaties were sent over from time to time for aid, but in vain; Henry was engaged in a life or death struggle at home.

In 1406 there were great efforts made on the part of the French court to seize the tempting opportunity to gain possession of all Henry's Continental territories. The two most powerful nobles of the realm were commissioned to execute this vast enterprise. The Duke of Orleans, the king's brother, was to lead the forces against Guienne, whilst the Duke of Burgundy, called "John Sanspeur," or the Fearless, was to expel the English from Calais. He cut down a whole forest to construct machines which should batter down the walls, and burst in the gates of that strongly-fortified town, and reduce the houses to heaps of ruins by flinging in entire rocks. He was provided with two hundred pieces of cannon, and the most complete success was anticipated from his efforts. They resulted in nothing, and, like the Duke of Orleans, he returned to Paris, complaining of not having been supplied with sufficient funds, and demanding not only the cost of his useless machinery, but immense sums which he asserted had been due to his father. These he was not very likely to obtain, for France, Paris, and the court were in the most wretched condition of anarchy and exhaustion. The malady of the king—recurring fits of insanity—had left the Government in the hands of the contending princes, especially of Orleans and Burgundy. The queen and Orleans, united in a guilty alliance, managed to keep the main power in their hands. The king was a cipher and the country a ruin. At this time the royal household had not even food, except such as it took by force from the bakers, butchers, and dealers, in which they were imitated by the great nobles.

To this unhappy condition of things were now added the fierce disputes and recriminations of the rival dukes; but Orleans, supported by the queen's interest, maintained his stand, and Burgundy, in high dudgeon and disgust, retired to his own dominions, vowing vengeance against his chief opponent.

The Duke of Berri, uncle to both the contending princes, exerted himself to effect a reconciliation between them, and prevent the menaced civil strife, in addition to the already crushing calamities of France. In this he at length appeared successful; but the success was only apparent, the result was really tragical. Burgundy returned to Paris, visited the Duke of Orleans, who was somewhat indisposed, and there appeared the most cordial reconciliation. The Duke of Berri, enchanted with the happy effect of his good offices, on the 20th of November, 1407, accompanied his two nephews to the Church of the Augustines to hear mass, and there these seemingly amicable relatives took the sacrament together in token of their perfectly reconciled minds. In three days after, Orleans was murdered in the Rue Barbette, by eighteen assassins in the pay of his dear friend, the newly reconciled and forgiving Burgundy. What was worse, it came out that both these thoroughly depraved princes had entertained the same design of dispatching his rival, and that Burgundy had only got the start with his assassins. Burgundy absented himself from Paris for a short time, when he returned again, and boldly justified his deed. The king, who was at the moment in one of his more lucid intervals, wept over the fate of his brother, and vowed to avenge it; but the power of Burgundy was beyond that of the feeble monarch.

The Orleans family, finding that no justice was to be obtained from the feeble and corrupt government, but, on the contrary, that the people of Paris hailed John of Burgundy as a second Brutus, who had freed his country of a tyrant aiming at the crown, and that the very lawyers and clergy justified the murder on the same pleas, declaring that Orleans had produced the king's insanity through sorcery and drugs, determined to take arms and enforce it for themselves.

Burgundy, to strengthen himself with the Parisians, promised to reduce the monstrous weight of taxation under which they groaned, and they applauded him as their saviour. Revolt amongst Burgundy's subjects in Flanders withdrew him for a time from Paris, during which the queen, in the name of her son, the dauphin, declared Burgundy an enemy of the state, and threw all her energies into the interests of the Orleanists. But Burgundy returned victorious from his contest with his subjects, and in November entered Paris at the head of 6,000 men.

Once more, in the following March, the farce of a reconciliation took place between Burgundy and the young Duke of Orleans, at Chartres, where the children of Orleans embraced their father's murderer. But this base unnatural union was as hollow as the former one; the old animosity burst forth anew; and the young Duke of Orleans, who had married a daughter of the Count of Armagnac, was supported by that able and energetic nobleman in his opposition to Burgundy. From this day the whole of France was divided into the great hostile factions—the Orleanists and the Armagnacs—so called from the Count of Armagnac assuming the lead in his son-in-law's quarrel by his superior vigour and experience. The Dukes of Berri and Brittany, and the Count d'Alençon, embraced the cause of Orleans, and Burgundy was compelled to retire from Paris.

Henry IV., relieved from his own domestic foes, had watched this contest from the commencement with the deepest interest. His calculating soul saw that now the time was coming for him to take vengeance on France for its insults and injuries during the whole period of his struggles with his rebellious nobles. He foresaw that the first failing combatant would turn to him for aid, and he determined that it should be granted, because it would damage France. What he knew must come came now; and it was the more agreeable, because it enabled him to pay to the son of Orleans the debt of hate which he owed to the father for his haughty defiance and his taunts of murder.

Burgundy solicited his aid, and it was immediately granted in the shape of 1,000 archers and 800 men-at-arms. Burgundy, with this force, formidable though small—for the fame of the English bowmen in France was not forgotten—drove the Orleanists from Paris and took their place in October of 1411, amid the acclamations of the people. Burgundy had now secured the persons of the king and the dauphin, and with this semblance of being the royal party he marched against the Orleanists, and besieged them in Bourges. In their retreat from Paris they had plundered the Abbey of St. Denis, and carried off a treasure of the queen deposited there, which naturally alienated the mind of that lady.

In their distress the Orleanists now in their turn sought aid from Henry of England, and it was granted with equal alacrity. Henry had satisfied his resentment against the Orleans family by punishing and humbling them; and he was rendered placable by still more powerful motives. The Orleanists offered very tempting terms. They offered to acknowledge him as the rightful Duke of Aquitaine, and to assist him to recover all the ancient rights and lands of that duchy. They agreed to hold of him, as their feudal lord, whatever they possessed there; to restore to him twenty towns which had been severed from it; and to give security that, on the deaths of the present lords, the counties of Angoulême and Ponthieu should revert to him and his successors. Henry, on his part, agreed to assist them as his faithful vassals in all their just quarrels; to enter into no treaty with the Duke of Burgundy or his family without their consent; and to send at once to their assistance 3,000 archers and 1,000 men-at-arms, to serve for three months at the proper wages, which are stated to be, men-at-arms one shilling and sixpence, and archers ninepence per day.

The news of this convention altered greatly the position of the contending parties. The Armagnacs received the Duke of Burgundy with an unusual display of spirit. The Duke of Berri threw himself, with 800 men-at-arms into Bourges, and threatened to defend it while a man was left. But there was a large party in France who beheld with alarm and sorrow their common country thus torn by her own children, and the English, who had aforetime perpetrated such horrors there, thus introduced by them. Their utmost exertions were used to reconcile the hostile factions; and happily they succeeded. Burgundy met his uncle, the Duke of Berri, at an appointed place outside the walls of Bourges, where an accommodation was agreed upon; and as a means of making the peace permanent, the Duke of Burgundy agreed to give one of his daughters to a younger brother of Orleans. The two leaders took a very extraordinary mode of convincing the people of the sincerity of their alliance. They rode into the city both mounted on one horse; and the spectators, transported with joy at the sight, shouted with all their might, and sang *Gloria in excelsis.*

In the midst of this exultation, the news arrived that Thomas Duke of Clarence, the second son of King Henry, had landed in Normandy, with 4,000 men, and was joined by the Counts of Alençon and Richemont. A deputation was immediately dispatched to inform the English leader of the peace, and to beg him to retire, as his aid was no longer needed. But Clarence naturally demanded the payment of the expenses of the expedition; and as they were not forthcoming, he advanced through Normandy into Maine, laying waste the country as he proceeded; while another body of English from Calais occupied great part of Artois. Six hundred men-at-arms hastened to the standard of the duke, who overran and plundered Maine and Anjou. Attempts were made, by promises of payment, to gain time for the assembling of troops; but Clarence was deaf

PRINCE HENRY BEFORE JUDGE GASCOIGNE. (*See p.* 543.)

to any such decoys. He had a very simple course laid down for him by his deeply calculating father: to do all the mischief he could in repayment of the various descents of the French on the English coasts, and their destruction of the English merchant ships; and by this very mischief to compel the Government to liberal terms for his withdrawal.

As there was no money in the national exchequer, there was a loud cry to arms, but it was feebly responded to. In the meantime, Clarence having overrun Maine and Anjou, prepared to invade the duchy of Orleans; this had the effect of bringing the young duke to the English camp with all the money he could muster, and having arranged with the invader for the payment of the whole cost of the expedition—209,000 crowns—he left his brother, the Duke of Angoulême, as hostage in Clarence's hands for its payment.

On this, the Duke of Clarence did not quit the country, as was hoped, but marched on into Guienne, forbidding his troops to commit further devastations by the way, but allowing them to inform the inhabitants as they went along that they should not be long before they came again in the name of their own King Henry to carry on the war; words which were afterwards fulfilled to a terrible extent.

This was the last great operation of the reign of Henry IV. By a singular combination of tact, cool calculation, vigilant watchings of every movement around him, and a purpose which was delayed through no conscientious scruples, nor weakened by a single tender feeling, he had put down all his foes. He was at peace at home and abroad. Not a man was left alive who dared to tell him that he was a usurper, except the undaunted Glendower, who was too far off amid his mountains to be heard. He was the most sagacious and successful monarch in Europe, and perhaps its most miserable man.

Though by nature not peculiarly sanguinary or ferocious, the ambition of mounting a throne had led him into the deepest crimes and through torrents of blood. Had his title been good and his throne unassailed, he might have won the character of a mild and even excellent monarch, though it is not probable that he could under any circumstances have won the character of a generous or magnanimous one. But stung by the taunts and nerved by the determined hostility of his enemies, he defended himself with the vigour of a giant, and punished his fallen opponents with the deadly cruelty of the tiger. While youth remained, and rapid and incessant action engrossed him, he seemed to soar above all the feelings and fears of an ordinary man. He boldly replied to those who upbraided him with his criminal seizure of his cousin's crown and realm, that the successful issue announced the approbation of the Almighty. But his health decayed prematurely. His body had been overworked, his mind had been overtasked, his conscience had been overburdened. As his strength gave way, his stoicism gave way with it. In his youth he has been described as gay and agreeable, and in his most active years, even when overwhelmed with business and menaced by the greatest dangers, he was cheerful, affable, ready to converse with the people whom he came amongst. As disease and debility announced a not distant end, he grew gloomy, retiring, ascetic in his devotions, and suspicious even of his own son.

His false position had forced on him every species of false conduct, and deeds which brought their certain punishment. There is every reason to believe that he sacrificed his sincere conviction of the truth of the Wycliffite doctrines, in order to purchase the powerful sanction of the Church for his unrighteous title; for before his usurpation he went along with his father in the protection of Wycliffe and the Lollards. To please the hierarchy he persecuted the Lollards, and was the first to give his sanction to the death of religious dissentients by the terrible means of fire. Yet, as if Providence would punish his apostasy by a striking antithesis, he was compelled, by the rebellion of an archbishop, to be the first in England to visit with capital punishment a prelate of the Established Church.

It is curious that soon after his execution of the Archbishop of York, he was attacked by the most loathsome eruptions on the face, or, as it appears to have been, an inveterate leprosy. This the people naturally believed to be a judgment from Heaven upon him for that sacrilegious act, and probably some such conviction might haunt his own mind. Though in stature somewhat below the middle size, he was vigorously and finely formed. His features were regularly beautiful in his youth, and in some of his penitential communications he confessed to having been greatly proud of them. But, by the ravages of this repulsive complaint, they became so hideous that he was compelled at length to avoid appearing in public. To this disease were added attacks of epilepsy, which became more and more violent, so that he would lie in death-like trances for hours.

As Henry declined in health, he seems to have grown increasingly jealous of the popularity of his son, the Prince of Wales. The young prince had acquired great glory by his conduct at the battle of Shrewsbury, and in his warfare against Owen Glendower. He was free, jocund, fond of pleasure, and of mixing with all classes of the people. Shakespeare has made his life and character the most living and familiar of things. He has surrounded him by a set of jolly companions, the fat and witty Sir John Falstaff, Bardolph, "mine ancient Pistol," and the whole band of roysterers who haunted the "Boar's Head," Eastcheap. He has drawn his inimitable portraiture of the merry Prince Hal from the chroniclers of the time, who describe him as the idol of the people. He was as dissipated as an heir-apparent generally is, but with his follies he displayed what his father never possessed—a generous temperament. No sooner was he on the throne than he offered terms of pacification to his most persevering enemy, Owen Glendower. The anecdote of his conduct before Judge Gascoigne, has been represented as doubtful by some of our modern historians, and does not rest on contemporary authority; we give it, however, as it is so familiar.

One of the prince's associates had been arraigned for felony before Chief Justice Gascoigne, the upright magistrate whom we have seen refusing to execute his father's illegal acts at York. The prince appeared before the magistrate, and peremptorily demanded the release of his boon companion. The Chief Justice refused, when Henry drew his sword upon him, and swore that he would have the man liberated. The judge calmly ordered the prince to be committed to prison himself as a greater offender, since he was, by his position, bound expressly to be a maintainer of the laws. Henry at once, in the innate nobility of his nature, felt and admired the lofty virtue of the magistrate. He submitted to his order, and it is related that when the fact was mentioned to his father, he said, "Happy is the monarch who possesses a judge so resolute in the discharge of his duty, and a son so willing to yield to the authority of the law."

Henry passed the last Christmas of his life at his favourite palace of Eltham. So complete was his seclusion, owing both to his illness and the awful disfigurement of his person, that he scarcely saw any one but the queen; lying frequently for hours without any sign of life. After Candlemas, he was so much better as to be able to keep his birthday, and he then returned to his palace at Westminster. He was at his devotions in the abbey, at the shrine of St. Edward, when his last fatal fit seized him. The well-known story of his last moments is also very doubtful. According to it, the king was removed into the apartments of the abbot, and laid in the celebrated Jerusalem Chamber. The fit lasted so long that Prince Henry, who was present, knowing the plunder which often takes place at the death-beds of kings, and which was remarkably the case at that of Edward III., ordered the crown to be removed to another and securer apartment.

On coming to himself Henry asked where he was, and being told in the Jerusalem Chamber, he regarded his last hour as come, for it had been predicted to him that he should finish his days in Jerusalem; and he had vowed, in expiation of his crimes, to make a pilgrimage thither. The days of the Crusades were over, but a remarkable visit made to him soon after he ascended the throne, by Manuel Palæologus, the Emperor of Constantinople, when seeking aid against the Saracens, probably impressed his mind with this idea. He then requested that the *Miserere* should be read to him, which contains an especial prayer for forgiveness of "blood-guiltiness." Then looking round he missed the crown from its place, and demanded to know where it was. The scenes which followed have been faithfully and beautifully copied by Shakespeare.

"Ah! fair son," said the dying king; "what right have you to the crown, when you know that your father had none?"

"My liege," answered young Henry; "with the sword you won it, and with the sword I will keep it."

"Well," replied the king, faintly, "do as you think best. I leave the issue to God, and may He have mercy on my soul." And then followed that beautiful address so finely rendered in Shakespeare—

> "Come hither, Harry; sit thou by my bed," etc.

Henry IV. was in the forty-seventh year of his age, and the fourteenth year of his reign, when he died. It is curious that as he usurped the throne of Richard II., he also usurped, as far as in him lay, his tomb. The body of Richard he sent to be buried at Langley, instead of permitting it to rest with the ashes of his father, the Black Prince; but there his own body was ordered to be conveyed, for he had expressed a superstitious desire that he might lie near the shrine of Thomas Becket.

Henry IV. was twice married. His first wife was Mary de Bohun, daughter and co-heir of the Earl of Hereford. By her he had four sons and two daughters. Henry was his successor to the throne; Thomas was Duke of Clarence; John, Duke of Bedford; and Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. His eldest daughter, Blanche, was married to the Duke of Bavaria, and the second to the King of Denmark.

Conscious of the defect of his title, Henry was careful to avoid, on ascending the throne, asking for any act of settlement. He contented himself with receiving the oath of allegiance from Parliament to himself, and after himself to his eldest son or heir-apparent. But after the battle of Shrewsbury he introduced a bill resting the succession on his four sons, but excluding his daughters. But on being reminded that to exclude his daughters annihilated all his claim to the throne of France, he reluctantly consented to the passing of an act admitting the general issue of his sons, but still passing over that of his daughters, as if fearful to bring in some foreign aspirant.

By his second wife, Joanna of Navarre, daughter of Charles the Bad, he had no children. Joanna made a much better queen than might have been expected from her parentage. Her worst faults appear to have been great fondness for money, and for a numerous train of French attendants, which obliged Parliament frequently to interfere, as did that of Charles I., and insist on their being sent home. She was handsome in person, but had the reputation of being addicted to the arts of necromancy, no doubt arising from the evil reputation of her father. We shall hear of her again in the next reign.

The defect of Henry's title was a circumstance favourable to the progress of the constitution, though prolific of much controversy and bloodshed. Compelled to court the goodwill of the people, and to come to them often for money, the House of Commons availed themselves of this circumstance to increase their demands of privilege and liberty. In his very first year they passed a law depriving the Crown of the power of protecting an unjust judge. In the second, they insisted on the removal of obnoxious persons from his household, and prevailed; in the sixth, they appointed treasurers to superintend the expenditure of the supplies; in the eighth, they enacted thirty articles for the regulation of the royal household, and compelled the judges, the council, and all the officers of the household to swear to the observance of them. The practice of the Crown corrupting Parliament had shown itself in the reign of Richard II., and was now rife, through means of the sheriffs. The Commons obtained an act to compel them to make just returns. They even went so far, when pressed by the king for money, as to recommend him to seize the surplus temporalities of the Church, which they represented as containing 18,400 ploughs of land, producing 485,000 marks a year, equal to £4,750,745 of our present money.

Here, however, the king stood firm against the recommendation of the Commons; and even, to oblige the Church, he consented to the passing of the first law for the burning of heretics (*De heretico comburendo*), that is, of persons who dared to differ in opinion from the religion of the State; and in accordance with this barbarous act, William Sawtrey, rector of Lynn in Norfolk, and afterwards curate of St. Osith's in London, the first English martyr, was burnt at the stake on the 10th of March, 1401.

KING AT TABLE (FOURTEENTH CENTURY).

[*From Royal MS.*, 2 *B7*, *fol.* 57.]

GREAT SEAL OF HENRY V.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE REIGN OF HENRY V.

Character of the King—Oldcastle's Rebellion—Attempts to Reform the Church—Henry's Reasons for the French War—Distracted Condition of France—Henry's Claims on the French Throne—Conspiracy of Cambridge—Fall of Harfleur—The March to Calais—The Battle-field of Agincourt—Events of the Battle—Visit of Sigismund to England—French Attack on Harfleur—Anarchy in France—Alliance between the Queen and the Burgundians—Henry's Second Invasion—Final Rebellion and Death of Oldcastle—Reduction of Lower Normandy—Siege and Capture of Rouen—Negotiations for Peace—Henry Advances on Paris—Murder of Burgundy—His Son Joins Henry—Treaty of Troyes—Defeat of the English at Beaugé—Henry in Paris—His Death.

The short reign of Henry V. is like a chapter of romance. It is the history of the life of a prince who was especially a hero. Young, handsome, accomplished not only in arms but in learning, skilled in and fond of music, valorous, chivalrous, generous, and successful to the very height of human glory in arms, he lived beloved and died young, the pride of his native country, whose martial fame he raised above that of all others, and made it the wonder of the world.

The fears which Prince Henry's wildness had created in the mind of his father, who seemed to anticipate in his son another Richard II., do not appear to have been at all participated in by the people. They saw in the prince too many proofs of a clear, strong, and generous spirit to doubt of his ultimate conduct. The cold and ungenerous nature of his father, his continual demands on their purses, to put down the enemies which his criminal ambition had raised around him; his murder of Richard II., and his many executions of his opponents, members of the noblest families of the realm, had completely alienated their affections, and they looked with the most lenient eyes on the jollities and practical jokes of his more warm-hearted son. The manner in which Henry justified these expectations immediately on the death of his father must have been particularly flattering to the sagacious foresight of the public. The base and obsequious found to their astonishment that they had lost instead of won his favour. Those who apprehended his wrath by the fulfilment of stern duties, were cheered to find themselves appreciated and advanced. The upright Chief Justice Gascoigne stood first and foremost in the full sunshine of his favour.

The removal of the body of Richard II. from Langley to Westminster, where it was buried with royal pomp, has been attributed to policy rather than generosity in Henry, as trusting to convince the public by it that Richard was actually dead;

but the whole of Henry's character shows that he was far above any such miserable policy; that he was as open and straightforward in following his honest convictions as he was intrepid in despising mere state tricks; and the very next fact that we have to record proves this strikingly. Henry could afford to pay respect to a dead monarch, but a living claimant to the throne was a more formidable thing. The Earl of March, the true heir to the throne, was not only living, but still a young man, and had been brought up much in Henry's society. So far, however, from entertaining any jealous fear of him, like his father, he at once received him with the utmost courtesy and kindness, gave him the most unlimited freedom, and full enjoyment of all his honours and estates. He displayed the same generous disposition in reversing the attainder of the Percies, and in recalling the young Lord Percy from Scotland to the full restoration of all his titles and demesnes. Still further; all those who during his father's time had sought to recommend themselves by a ruthless zeal for the Lancastrian interests, he removed from their offices, and supplied their places by men of more honourable and independent minds, without regard to party. No conduct could have been more just and noble, and, therefore, more wise, than that of the young king; and the consequence was, that he won all hearts to him, and fixed himself as firmly on the throne as if he had been descended in the strictest course from its true kings. Amongst the very first to support him in his royal position was the Earl of March himself, who continued to the last his most faithful subject and attached friend.

But no character is without its defective side, and that in Henry showed itself in regard to ecclesiastical reform. The followers of Wycliffe had now increased into a numerous body, under the name of Lollards. They consisted chiefly of the commonalty, and included few of the upper ranks. But amongst them was Sir John Oldcastle, a bold and able man, Sir Thomas Talbot, Sir Roger Acton, and others. Sir John Oldcastle was more commonly known as Lord Cobham, having married the heiress of that nobleman, and being called to the House of Lords in right of his wife. Lord Cobham, it appears, had, while the companion of Henry, as Prince of Wales, been so distinguished for his gaiety and humouring of all the prince's whims that his enemies called him "the ruffian knight, commonly brought in by the commediants on their stage." For a century after his time he is represented as walking the boards of the theatre in the character which Shakespeare has now transferred to Sir John Falstaff. But as the prince had reformed, so it appears had Lord Cobham also. He had embraced the principles of the Lollards, and the ability and high character of the man inspired the Church with alarm.

The Church, startled at the new phenomenon of the laity assuming the office of self-inquiry and self-decision, and still more by the obstinacy with which the people maintained this novel function, began to punish and coerce. The prelates persecuted the reformers, and the reformers, raised to a sublime sense of their own right by a nearer approach to Christian truth, rebelled as vigorously. The war of opinion assumed its bitterest aspect. The Church, too far removed from the experience of the primitive ages, had again to learn the power of persecution to produce that which it would destroy.

In a fatal hour, Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, obtained the statute *De heretico comburendo*, by which William Sawtrey had been burnt, and now again sought to apply the same deceptive remedy. With this intent he applied to Henry for permission to indict Lord Cobham, as the head and great encourager of the sect, for heresy, and by his public execution to strike terror into the whole body of reformers. Henry, however, was by nature too averse from persecution, and too mindful of his old friendship for this nobleman, to accede at once to so violent a measure. He undertook to have some conversation with Lord Cobham on the subject, observing very truly to the primate that gentleness and persuasion were the best means of conversion. He therefore called Cobham into his closet at Windsor, and exerted the knowledge which he had acquired of school divinity at Oxford, to convince his friend. Words probably of severity arose between the king and Lord Cobham, for the latter suddenly left Windsor and withdrew to his own house of Cowling in Kent.

Henry now seems to have lost his tenderness towards his old friend in the awakened feeling of a determination to subdue where he failed to convince, and to have given Arundel permission to take his own way with the offender; for, immediately on Lord Cobham's withdrawal, there appeared proclamations ordering all magistrates to apprehend every itinerant preacher, and directing the archbishop to proceed against Cobham according to law; that is, the recent law against heresy. This alarming measure brought back

Lord Cobham to Windsor, having drawn up a confession of faith, probably in conjunction with his most eminent friends. This confession still exists, subscribed by Cobham himself, and on looking it over at this time of day, one is at a loss to discover in it what any true Catholic could object to.

But Henry would not even receive Cobham's confession. His blood was evidently up, and in that mood he was firm as a rock. He declared that he had nothing to do with confessions of faith; they belonged to bishops: forgetting that he had just before undertaken to expound his own faith in order to convert his heretical friend. Cobham then offered, in the spirit of the times, for he was a brave and experienced soldier, to purge himself from the charge of heresy by doing battle with any adversary, Christian or infidel, who dared to accept his challenge. But Henry simply asked him whether he would submit to the decision of the bishops, which he refused; but still, like a good Catholic, offered to appeal to the Pope. Henry's only answer was to leave him to the tender mercies of Arundel, who summoned him before him, and, in conjunction with his three suffragans, the Bishops of London, Winchester, and St. David's, condemned him to be burnt. But Henry still was not prepared to acquiesce in so desperate a doom on one who had spent with him so many mirthful days. He granted the reformer a respite of fifty days; and before that time had expired, Lord Cobham had managed to escape from his prison, probably by the connivance of his lenient sovereign.

But once more at large, and in communication with his friends and confederates, Cobham became all the more active in his plans for the maintenance of the great cause. The Church had now manifested its intentions; it had shown that it was not conversion, but destruction of the whole body of the reformers that it was resolved upon; and the question, therefore, with the persecuted sect naturally was, by what means it was to prevent the fate which menaced it. If we are to believe the chroniclers of the times, the Lollards resolved to anticipate their enemies, to take up arms, and to repel force by force. Seeing clearly that war to the death was determined against them by the Church, and that the king had yielded at least a tacit consent to this iniquitous policy, they came to the conclusion to kill not only the bishops, but the king and all his kin.

So atrocious a conspiracy is not readily to be credited against men who contended for a greater purity of gospel truth, nor against men of the practical and military knowledge of Lord Cobham. But over the whole of these transactions there hangs a veil of impenetrable mystery, and we can only say that the Lollards are charged with endeavouring to surprise the king and his brother at Eltham, as they were keeping their Christmas festivities there, and that this attempt failed through the court receiving intimation of the design, and suddenly removing to Westminster. Disappointed in this scheme, the Lollards were next summoned from all quarters to march towards London, there to secure and kill all the principal clergy. They were, according to these accounts, to meet in St. Giles's Fields, on the night of the 6th of January.

The king, it is stated, being warned of this movement, gave due notice to the city, and on the day previous to the proposed meeting, the Mayor of London made various arrests of suspected persons, amongst others of a squire of Lord Cobham's, at the sign of the "Ark," in Bishopsgate Without. The aldermen were ordered to keep strict watch each in his own ward, and at midnight Henry himself issued forth with a strong force. He is represented as being greatly alarmed for the public safety, from the popular insurrections which had lately been raging in Paris, and to which we shall presently have to draw attention. He ordered all the city gates to be closed, to keep the Lollards who were within the walls separate from those without, hastening then to the place of rendezvous.

Here again the narratives of this unaccountable affair contradict each other. One declares that all the roads were covered with the adherents of Lord Cobham, hastening to the appointed spot in St. Giles's Fields; that on asking the first overtaken whom they were for, they replied by the preconcerted watchword—"For Sir John Oldcastle;" and that these being seized, the rest took the alarm and fled. By other accounts there were expected to be 25,000 men collected in the same fields, but only fourscore were found there. Cobham made his escape, but about forty of the captives were drawn and hanged as traitors, and then burnt; amongst them Sir Roger Acton, whose body, instead of being burnt, was buried under the gallows.

Nevertheless Parliament was eager for Church reform. We find in Hall, folio 35, that on the king demanding supplies, they renewed the offer which they had made to his father to seize all the ecclesiastical revenues, and convert them to the use of the Crown. The clergy were greatly alarmed by this demonstration from their own coadjutors, and feeling that the age was ripe for compelling them to disgorge a good portion of their enormous wealth, they agreed to confer upon Henry all the alien priories which depended on capital abbeys in Normandy, and had been bequeathed to those abbeys when that province continued united to England. It was now that the new Archbishop Chicheley, endeavoured to turn the attention of the king by recommending him to carry war into France.

Henry was himself already meditating that very step. It was the dying advice of his father not to permit his subjects to remain long in inaction, which, in an age which possessed few resources but hunting or war to sufficiently occupy the minds of the great barons, was sure to breed domestic factions, while successful war kept them about the person of their prince, and attached them to him by every motive of honour and advantage. The state of France at that epoch was such as rendered a fresh attempt to conquer it most alluring, and even to suggest the idea to a monarch like Henry, chivalrous and ambitious of glory, that he was, in a manner, called by God to the salutary work of rescuing a great nation from its own suicidal frenzy, and punishing the iniquity of its people—which was actually monstrous—as the Israelites were led up to punish the corrupt inhabitants of Canaan. Having, therefore, consented to the desires of the Church, and of Parliament, that all judges and magistrates should arrest any persons suspected even of Lollardism, and deliver them over to the tender mercies of the ecclesiastical courts, and that these unfortunate schismatics should, on conviction, forfeit all their lands, goods, and chattels, as in cases of felony—he addressed himself to his great enterprise, the conquest of France.

That unfortunate country was in the most deplorable condition. The dissension, the unbounded dissoluteness, and the mutual murder of the princes, seemed to have utterly debauched and demoralised the people. From head to foot, the whole body, political and social, was diseased. Every principle of honour and of rectitude, every feeling of conscience or of pity appeared extinct. Cruelty, rapacity, crime, and lawlessness were become the grand features of the nation. It was high time that some power should interpose to scourge that debased generation and restore some sense of patriotism and virtue through a better *régime,* if possible; and this was, in truth, the only title which Henry had to interfere. Bad as had been the claims set up by the Edwards, his was far worse; for he was the son of the usurper even in his own country, and if any just right to the crown of France could be established by the English Plantagenets, it resided in the Earl of March, and not at all in him. But, while Henry, in an amusingly confident manner, still talked of his hereditary title to the French throne, he did not omit to add what really was more obvious, that he was the appointed instrument of Providence to chastise the flagrant iniquity of the rulers of France.

That reconciliation of the Duke of Orleans to Burgundy, the murderer of his father, which we have recorded, did not last three months. After the retirement of the Duke of Clarence to Guienne, this feud broke out with fresh fury. The Count of Armagnac, the father-in-law of Orleans, one of the most clear-sighted men amongst them, indeed, never laid down his arms. Burgundy continued in Paris, and there he got up a popular faction which gradually drew the whole city into scenes and outrages which remind us of the Parisian revolutions of our own times. He made a league with the butchers, who came out with ferocious alacrity, glad of such a sanction to play a conspicuous part on that great theatre of national confusion. They adopted a white hood as their badge; and, being in alliance with the Duke of Burgundy, they also opened a communication with his revolutionary subjects in Flanders. The judges, the barristers, the members of Parliament, the noblesse, the professors and students of the university, the clergy, the monks, every class of the community, in short, were obliged to wear the white hood, as the only livery of patriotism. A reign of terror now commenced; the whole of the populace were ranged under the white hood, and had acquired the name of Cabochiens from one of their most ferocious leaders. They had reduced the upper classes of all descriptions to an ostensible submission to their despotism, and they now began to perpetrate every species of disorder.

To make confusion worse confounded, the dissolute and heartless Louis, the dauphin, quarrelled with the Duke of Burgundy, and fomented intrigues and parties against him. Chief was arrayed against chief, and mob against mob. The respectable portion of the citizens, long made dumb with terror, took heart as the host of their plebeian tyrants began to direct their terrible energies against each other, and sent secretly to the Armagnacs. From being stout Burgundians thousands now declared openly for Orleans and his father-in-law; and when the Duke of Berri endeavoured to force on the city a heavy tax, to carry on the war against the Armagnacs, they rebelled resolutely. In vain were the master butchers employed to levy the hateful impost; their rude compulsion only drove the burghers more rapidly into the arms of the opposite faction. The butchers mustered in formidable force in the Place de Grève, so memorable for its horrors on a more recent day; but, after a vigorous fight, they were vanquished, and were eventually driven out of Paris. The Duke of Burgundy was soon compelled to follow his butcher faction, and in August, after making an abortive attempt to carry off the king, he retired to Flanders. The Duke of Orleans entered the city with the Armagnacs. Everything, except disorder, was changed. The ministers and magistrates were removed, and replaced by others of the party in the ascendant. Those who had imprisoned and persecuted, now had the same, or a severer measure meted out to themselves. The faction of the dauphin was there struggling with that of the Armagnacs, and that of the queen against her own son, Louis, who had been amongst the first to call in the Armagnacs, now as earnestly implored the return of the Duke of Burgundy.

HENRY V.

Early in 1414 Burgundy accordingly marched to Paris with a large army, expecting to find the gates opened to him by the dauphin; but, on the contrary, it was stoutly defended by Orleans and the Count of Armagnac, who threatened to hang up any one on the spot who showed the least disposition to favour Burgundy. The duke was compelled to retreat again into Flanders, and leave the Armagnacs in complete superiority. They had the king in their hands, and they compelled him to sign anything they pleased. The Duke of Burgundy was declared by royal proclamation guilty of "the damnable murder of the late Duke of Orleans," as well as of sundry other high crimes and treasons, and condemned to the forfeiture of all his territories.

The Armagnacs, having issued this proclamation, marched out of Paris, seized the duke's city of Compiègne and laid siege to Soissons. This town was defended by the brave Count de Bournonville, and at this siege the archers of England were found fighting against their fellow-subjects, the archers of Guienne. But the English very soon opened the gates to their countrymen from Bordeaux; the Armagnacs rushed in, and perpetrated one of the most frightful massacres in history. From the butchery of Soissons this fanatic army marched to Arras, into which Burgundy had managed to retire; but they were there successfully resisted. While meditating to raise the siege, the alarming news arrived of the King of England's preparations for the invasion of France. A hollow truce was patched up between the contending parties; but, before the Armagnacs withdrew from the city, the house in which the king lodged was found to be on fire (probably from design by some of the desperadoes of one or other faction), and he escaped with difficulty.

Once more Paris became the rendezvous of the various chiefs of these revolting factions; where, in the autumn, the infamous dauphin originated a conspiracy to drive both Burgundians and Armagnacs from the capital, to secure the person of the king, and to make himself dictator. The scheme failed; and Louis was himself obliged to flee to Bourges. The Armagnacs once more rose on his retreat, fell on the Burgundians with fury, and expelled their wives and children from the city.

Again in April of the following year, 1415, the dauphin regained possession of Paris by a base stratagem. He invited his mother, Queen Isabella, the Dukes of Orleans and Berri, with the other princes of the blood, to meet at Mélun, in order to settle all differences and unite with one accord against the English invader. The queen and princes fell into the snare. They set out for Mélun, and the dauphin simultaneously hastened into the capital, closed the gates against them, and ordered them, with the exception of Berri, severally to retire to their estates. Never was a country so torn by faction and desolated and degraded by crime; and it was at this moment that Henry of England prepared to descend on the devoted land.

In little more than twelve months after mounting the throne, Henry forwarded to France, in July, 1414, his demand of the crown of that country. No answer was returned. He then reduced his requisition from the whole realm to the following modest one—namely, the provinces of Normandy, Maine, and Anjou; the territories which formerly composed the duchy of Aquitaine; and the several towns and counties included in the treaty of Brétigny. He further required that Charles VI. should put him in possession of half of Provence, the inheritance of Eleanor and Sanchia —the queens of Henry III., and of his brother Richard, and two of the four daughters of Berenger, once sovereign of that country; that he should pay up the arrears of King John's ransom, 1,600,000 crowns, and give Henry his daughter Catherine, with 2,000,000 crowns more.

To this astounding demand the French Government replied that the king was willing to give the hand of his daughter, with 600,000 crowns, a higher sum than had ever been paid with any princess of France, and all the territories anciently included in the duchy of Aquitaine.

To this Henry refused to consent, but summoned a Parliament, the Speaker of which was Thomas Chaucer, the son of the great poet, and received from it the unwontedly liberal supply of two-tenths and two-fifteenths. To give an air of moderation to his demands, however, Henry still pretended to negotiate. He sent over to Paris a splendid embassy, consisting of 600 horsemen, headed by the Earl of Dorset and the Bishops of Durham and Norwich. They entered the capital with so much parade and magnificence, that the French vanity was surprised and mortified by it. The ambassadors first proposed a continuation of the truce for four months. They repeated the terms of the former embassy as to peace and the matrimonial alliance of the two countries, but consented to accept the princess with half the original sum. On the other side, the French raised the amount proffered from 600,000 to 800,000 crowns. Here the matter ended, and the embassy returned.

This was, no doubt, precisely what Henry expected; and now he made preparations for an immediate invasion. On the 16th of April he summoned at Westminster a council of fifteen spiritual and twenty-eight temporal peers, when he announced his resolve "to recover his inheritance by arms." His speech was received with the utmost applause and enthusiasm. The great barons, and knights eager to obtain military fame, engaged to furnish their quotas of troops to the utmost of their ability; Parliament granted two-tenths and fifteenths, and dissolved and made over to the king no less than a hundred alien priories, not conventual. Henry himself exerted every means of increasing his resources. He raised loans by pawning his crown jewels, the magnificent crown itself of Henry IV., and by other means, and altogether amassed the sum of 500,000 nobles in ready money. He rifled the cupboards and buffets of the royal palaces, and gave them as pledges of the ultimate payment of their prices to great creditors.

The Duke of Bedford, Henry's brother, was appointed regent of the kingdom during the royal absence; and the youthful monarch, full of aspirations of glory and conquest, set forward towards Southampton, the port of embarkation.

But in the midst of Henry's active occupation of embarking his troops, danger was near him. A conspiracy to assassinate him was discovered at the very moment that it was intended to carry it into execution; and what is singular, the discovery came from the very person for whose special benefit the movement was intended.

The young Earl of March, as we have already had occasion to state, was not only the true heir to the throne, but had been brought up with Henry, and was really attached to him. The sister of the young earl was married to Richard, Earl of Cambridge, and brother to the Duke of York. Cambridge, by his alliance with the true prince, appears to have been infected with the ambitious desire of seeing himself not merely brother to a legitimate prince who was contented in his station, which, though that of a subject, was honourable and happy, but brother to a king. From the little light thrown by cotemporary historians on the progress of the plot, we can only perceive that Cambridge had sought the co-operation of several persons who were known to have acted or suffered in the opposition to the late king. These were Sir Thomas Grey of Heton, in Northumberland, and Lord Scrope of Masham, both of whom had been involved in the Percy insurrections themselves, or by their near relatives. Scrope was at this time high in the favour of his sovereign. He was his trusted chamberlain, and one of the most confidential of his privy council. In the chase and in his social hours, he was the chosen companion of Henry. Yet he appears to have given in to this base conspiracy, and Henry was to be assassinated before embarking, after which, the conspirators were to escape to Wales with the Earl of March, and there raise the banner of revolt in his behalf

It would seem that the conspiracy was as ill-constructed as it was wicked. The conspirators do not appear to have obtained the decided sanction of the principal person concerned. Probably Cambridge might have speculated on private conversations with his brother-in-law, the Earl of March, and have persuaded himself that he would fall in with such a scheme when it appeared to him feasible. But when, at the moment of action, March was apprised of the intended blow, he refused, by the earnest advice of his man Lacy, to swear to keep the secret, but required an hour in which to consider of the proposal. However the persuasions of Cambridge or his own secret feelings might have inclined him at any previous moment, now, when his friend and noble patron Henry was menaced with instant death, March at once decided, and hastened to apprise the king of his danger. That March had listened to the voice of the tempter is plain from his first requesting a pardon from Henry for his giving ear "to rebels and traitors sufficiently to understand their schemes."

This pardon Henry at once accorded, but he seized the conspirators, and brought them immediately before a council, where their fate was to be decided by twelve jurors of the county. Grey pleaded guilty to the charge of having conspired to kill the king, "to proclaim the Earl of March, in case Richard II. was really dead," to having by their emissaries solicited the said Richard—or, as he was by the indictment declared to be, Thomas of Trumpington, who personated that monarch—to invade the king's dominions with a body of Scottish forces and Scottish lords.

Cambridge and Scrope demanded to be tried by their peers, whereupon all the lords of the army were summoned; the Duke of Clarence was appointed to preside in place of the king, and the Duke of York, that he might not sit in judgment on his own brother, nominated the Earl of Dorset his proxy.

Cambridge made an earnest appeal to the king for mercy, and Scrope pleaded, like March, that he had only listened in order to ascertain the objects of the conspirators, so that he might effectually defeat them. The plea did not avail him any more than the cowardly prayer of Cambridge. They were all three condemned, were led out to the north gate of the town, and had their heads struck off, just as the royal fleet, with a favourable wind, hoisted sail, and bore out of the harbour of Southampton on the 13th of August, 1415.

This memorable expedition, thus painfully inaugurated by the blood of treason in the very near kindred of the king, consisted of 6,000 men-at-arms, and 24,000 archers, which so many occasions had now demonstrated to be the real power of England. These troops were carried in a fleet of 1,500 sail; and, with an auspicious wind, entered the mouth of the Seine on the second day, August 15th. Three days were consumed in landing the troops and stores, and it does not appear that there was any opposition from the enemy.

Henry at once laid siege to the strong fortress of Harfleur, situated on the left bank of the river, and defended by a numerous garrison, under the command of the Sire D'Estouteville. The French knights of the garrison displayed the utmost bravery, and made repeated assaults on the troops of Henry while throwing up their entrenchments, but they were received in such a manner by the archers that they were soon very glad to keep within the shelter of their walls. These walls themselves were in bad repair; the succours which had been promised by the Government did not arrive; the English cannon was fast demolishing the outworks, and sappers were undermining the towers. A worse enemy than the English was also amongst them—the dysentery, owing to the dampness of the place, and the unhealthy quality of the provisions; and the garrison surrendered on the 22nd of September, after a defence of thirty-six days.

The success, however, was dearly purchased. The weather was extremely hot, and the place, lying low on the banks of the Seine, was at that season extremely unhealthy. A dysentery, partly from those causes, and partly from the incautious eating of unripe fruit, and the putrid exhalations from the offal of animals killed for the camp, broke out, and raged amongst the soldiers far more mortally than the awkward artillery of that age. About 2,000 of the troops had perished, besides great numbers who were disabled by sickness. Several officers of rank died, and when Henry had shipped off his sick for England, including the Duke of Clarence, the Earls of March, Arundel, and many other great officers, his army was reduced to about one-half of its original number.

A council of war, which Henry had called before shipping off his invalids, had come to the decision of returning wholly to England, and making preparations for the next year; but to this Henry would not listen for a moment. To embark altogether, he said, would look like fear, and convert their conquest into a flight. He was resolved, he added, to march to Calais, and dare every peril, rather than the French should say he was afraid of them. France was his own, he contended, and he would see a little more of it before quitting it. He trusted in God that they should take their way without harm or danger, but if compelled to fight, glory and victory would be theirs, as it always had been that of his ancestors in that country. He declared his route to be Normandy, Picardy, and Artois to Calais.

Having taken this resolution, nothing could turn him from it, though he had only 900 lances and 5,000 archers, barely 6,000 men in all; while a French army of 100,000 men was already on foot to intercept his march. Before setting out he repaired the fortifications of Harfleur, and placed it under the command of his uncle, the Earl of Dorset, as governor, and Sir John Fastolf as lieutenant-governor, with a garrison of 2,000 men, who were independent of the 6,000 men he intended to take with him. He invited over many English families to settle in Harfleur, and make it a second Calais, granting them the houses and premises of the former inhabitants.

Having made these arrangements, on the 8th of October he set forward on his most daring march. He disposed his little host in three divisions, attended by two detachments, which served as van and rear guards on the march, ready to be converted in the field into wings for protecting his flanks. Never was a more daring enterprise undertaken. It might, according to all ordinary principles, be termed fool-hardy. But all the victorious expeditions of the first and third Edwards had been of the same character, and, had they failed, would have been recorded in history as unexampled instances of rashness and folly: so much depends on the result, rather than the antecedents, of an action.

At every step the little army of England was watched by overwhelming forces. The Constable of France, Count D'Albret, lay directly in their way in Picardy with 14,000 men-at-arms, and 40,000 foot, and laid waste the whole country before them. At Rouen the king and dauphin lay with another large army, and fresh troops were hastening from all quarters towards his line of march. The French host mustered in his track already upwards of 100,000; some writers say 140,000 men. Henry had to traverse a long tract of country infested with these exasperated enemies. His troops were in want of provisions, lodgings, guides, which their enemy took care to deprive them of. They had, in fact, to march through a desert, defended by strong towns, intersected by deep rivers, and were exposed every moment to have their scouts, foragers, and stragglers cut off, while the foe took care to avoid a general engagement.

THE ENGLISH BEFORE HARFLEUR. (*See p.* 552.)

The army was sometimes whole days without food. The wretched people were themselves starving, from the devastations purposely made by their own countrymen, and sickness began to decimate the British troops from their excessive fatigues and want of necessary food. At the passage of the river Bresle, the garrison of Eu made a furious sortie, and fell upon the rear of the army with loud shouts and amazing impetuosity, but, spite of the exhausted condition of the soldiers, they received the attack with coolness, slew the French commander, and drove back the garrison to its fortress.

In four days, that is, on the 12th of October, Henry had arrived at the ford of Blanchetaque, where his grandfather, Edward III. had passed the Somme. He had intended to do the same, but the French, taught by their former failure, had taken care to make this ford impassable by driving strong stakes into the bottom, and D'Albret appeared on the right bank with a numerous force. Disappointed in this expectation he retreated to the little town of Airennes, where Edward III. had slept two nights before the battle of Creçy. He then advanced up the river, searching for a ford or bridge, as Edward had sought down it. He avoided Abbeville, where D'Albret lay with his main army, and marched to Bailleul, where he slept on the 13th.

Still advancing upwards, he found every bridge broken, every ford secured, and D'Albret and his forces marching along the right bank in exact time with him, ready to repel any attempt at crossing the river.

Seeing this, many of his soldiers, already enervated with fatigue and sickness, began to lose heart.

The next day Henry attempted to force a passage at Pont St. Rémy, but without success, as Edward III. had done before him. On the 15th, the following day, he made another endeavour to cross at Ponteau de Mer, but was again foiled. Still going on, he tried other passages on the 16th and 17th, but without avail. Everywhere appeared the most hopeless obstacles. Taking advantage of the winding of the river, Henry now dashed across the country from the neighbourhood of Corbie to Boves, and thence marched on Nesle. On the way he made a halt in a valley, and ordered his archers to provide themselves each with a stake of six feet long, and to sharpen it at both ends. He then pushed forward again to outmarch the constable, who was obliged to follow a more circuitous route by Péronne. He had sent, however, strict orders to guard all the fords of the river, but not being present to see this enforced, Henry at Nesle received information that the passage was still open between Voyenne and Béthancourt. On the 19th, he came up to this place, and made a dash across it. Four bannerets led the way successfully; the rest of the army and the baggage followed rapidly in their track; and in twelve hours the English had arrived safely on the right bank. Henry marched on to Monchy-la-Gauche; while the constable, instead of daring to attack him, fell back on Bapaume, and thence on St. Pol.

While D'Albret had been guarding the passages of the Somme, the French princes, instead of attacking Henry, had held a council of war at Rouen in presence of the king. Here they had resolved to give battle to the English by a majority of thirty-five to five, and they fixed the 25th as the important day of action. They sent three heralds to announce this resolve to the King of England.

Henry was at Monchy when the heralds arrived. They delivered their message on their knees, which was that the King of France and his nobles were prepared to meet him in the field on the following Friday. Henry replied, with apparent indifference, "The will of God be done." The heralds then inquired by what way he meant to march, so that they might meet with him. He replied, "By that which leads straight to Calais: and if my enemies attempt to intercept me it will be at their peril. I shall not seek them, and I will not move a step quicker or slower to avoid them. I could, however, have wished that they had adopted other counsels, instead of attempting to shed the blood of Christians."

The Constable had placed himself in advance directly in Henry's route to Calais; but he followed leisurely on his track, as if no enemy were either before or behind him. Yet all this time fresh forces had been flocking in to the standard of the Constable; and his army was now so overwhelming, that it began to be impatient to fall on the English, confident that they could surround and destroy them. But the experienced D'Albret remembered the days of Creçy and Poitiers, when the like confidence had produced the most complete destruction to the French armies from a mere handful of these iron Englishmen. He fell back from St. Pol to the villages of Ruisseauville and Agincourt before he consented to stand and await the English king. It was evident that the eve of a decisive battle had arrived. It was equally impossible for Henry to advance towards Calais or retreat towards Harfleur. In fact, to attempt in the slightest degree to retreat would be synonymous with destruction; for that would utterly dishearten his own men and bring the immense swarms of the enemy like a flock of hungry wolves upon them. Even if they could beat back such a host under such circumstances, they must soon perish by the way, for the whole region was a wilderness, destitute of food or shelter. The hour of action had come.

Once more the French generals made the profound blunder of selecting a confined plain where their huge army had no room to move. The Constable planted his banner on the Calais road, a little in advance of the village of Ruisseauville, and the Dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, of Berri, Alençon, and Brabant, and all the great lords planted theirs round it with loud acclamations and

THE MORNING OF AGINCOURT.

From the Picture by Sir John Gilbert, R.A., P.R.W.S.

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rejoicings that the hour was come which was to give up to them their enemy and all his spoil. But the joy was soon damped, for the night set in dark and rainy. The ground was a clay which soon swam with water, and became so slippery that the horses slid and stumbled about in disorder. The pages and valets rode to and fro seeking straw to lay on the muddy ground for their officers and themselves. There were great bustling and moving to and fro; people shouting to one another and making much noise, but obtaining very little comfort; and it was at length observed that their horses stood silent and did not neigh, which was looked upon on the eve of battle as a very bad omen. When they would have cheered themselves with music, very few instruments could be found. At length, however, they succeeded in lighting fires along their lines, and bursts of laughter and merriment were repeatedly heard by the English, while their enemies were, no doubt, calculating the value of their horses and the arms on their backs.

The English, on their part, passed a night of serious reflection. They had made a long march under great difficulties and privations. Many of them were wasted by sickness, worn down by fatigue and scanty and unwholesome fare. They were in the presence of an immense force. But they were descendants of the heroes of Creçy, which lay not far off, and they had the utmost confidence in the bravery of their leader. They spent the early part of the night in making their wills, and in devotion. The king visited every quarter of his little camp, and sent out, as soon as the moon gave light enough, officers to arrange the plan of the battle on the next day, and ordered bands of music to play through the whole night.

At break of day Henry summoned the men to attend matins and mass, and then leading them into the field, arranged them in his usual manner, in three divisions and two wings; but in such close array that the whole appeared but as one body. The archers, who were his grand strength, he posted in advance of the men-at-arms, four in file, in the form of a wedge. Besides their bows and arrows, the archers were now armed each with a battle-axe and a sword. The fatal field of Bannockburn, where the archers were rendered useless by their want of side arms, when Bruce rode his cavalry amongst them, seems to have taught the English this precaution. Every man, too, bore on his shoulder the stout stake, which Henry had ordered them to provide themselves with, pointed at each end, and tipped with iron. These they planted obliquely before them, as chevaux de frise, and thus presented a formidable rampart to the French cavalry.

The French had drawn up their host in a manner similar to that of Henry, but instead of their files being four, they were thirty-nine deep. The Constable himself commanded the first division; the Dukes of Bar and Alençon the second. But in their eagerness to come at the English, they had crowded their troops into a narrow field between two woods, where they had no room to deploy, or even to use their weapons freely, and the ground was so slippery with the rain, that their horses could with difficulty keep on their legs; while the English archers, who were immediately opposed to them, were not only on foot, but many of them barefooted, and, disencumbered of their clothes, were ready to make their way alertly over the soft ground.

Both the French and English commanders had ordered their men to seat themselves on the ground with their weapons before them, and thus they continued to face each other without action for some time. The Constable, most probably to gain time for the arrival of the expected reinforcements, still lay quiet, and Henry took the opportunity to distribute refreshments of food and wine through his ranks. He also seized the opportunity to send off secretly two detachments, one to lie in ambush in a woody meadow at Tramecourt, on their left flank, and the other to set fire to some houses in their rear as soon as they were engaged, to throw them into alarm.

Scarcely had the king executed this manœuvre, when he was surprised by a deputation of three French knights from D'Albret, the commander. They came to offer him a free passage to Calais, if he would agree to surrender Harfleur, and renounce his pretensions to the throne of France. Henry disdained to enter into any negotiations except on the very same terms that he had dictated before he left England; and, penetrating the real object of these overtures, that of gaining time, he impatiently dismissed the matter. But the envoys were not to be so readily despatched. One of them, the Sire de Helly, who had been a prisoner in England, and was accused of breaking his parole, introduced that matter, and offered to meet in single combat, between the two armies, any man who should dare to asperse his honour.

"Sir Knight," said Henry, curtly, "this is no time for single combats. Go, tell your countrymen to prepare for battle, and doubt not that, for the violation of *your* word, *you* shall a second time forfeit your liberty if not your life."

"Sir," replied De Helly, insolently, determined to prolong the parley, "I will receive no orders from you. Charles is our sovereign. Him we will obey, and for him we will fight against you whenever we think proper."

"Away, then," said Henry, "and take care that we are not before you." And instantly stepping forward he cried, "Banners, advance!"

With that Sir Thomas Erpingham, a brave old warrior, threw his warder into the air, exclaiming, "Now strike!" and the English moved on in gallant style till they came within bowshot of the French lines. Then every man kneeling down kissed the ground, a custom which they had learned from the Flemish, who at the great battle of Courtray, where they defeated the French cavalry with such brilliancy, had thus each taken up a particle of earth in his mouth, while the priest in front elevated the Host. It was a sign of consecration to the great duty of the day; and having done this homage to the God of battles, they rose up with a tremendous shout, struck each man his pointed stake into the ground before him, and stepping in front of these stakes, sent a flight of arrows at their foes, and again retired behind them.

The Constable, who well knew the terrible effect of the English archers on the French troops, had prepared a scheme similar to that of Bruce at Bannockburn to break their line, and throw them into confusion. He had few or no archers, for the French at that period adhered to the feudal notion that knights and gentlemen only must handle arms. The dreadful defeats of Creçy and Poitiers had not cured them of the foolish idea that arms must not be trusted to plebeian hands. He therefore had trained a body of 1,200 men-at-arms under Messire Clignet, of Brabant, who were to make a desperate charge on the archers, and break up their ranks. They came on with fierce cries of "Mountjoye! St. Denis!" but the slipperiness of the ground, and the fierce flight of arrows which struck through their visors and their armour, threw them at once into confusion. Their horses reeled and stumbled against each other in the muddy clay, and to avoid the iron hail of arrows they turned their heads aside, and thus knew not how to guide their steeds. Of the whole 1,200 not more than seven score ever reached the spiked barricade of the archers, from which the few remaining horses recoiled; and the whole troop in a few minutes lay dead or wounded on the ground. Only three horses are said to have penetrated within the line of stakes, and there they fell perforated with wounds. Meantime, hundreds of wounded steeds were dashing to and fro, and continually returning upon the French lines, stung to madness by their pain. All became confusion and disorder in the first division. The men-at-arms were so wedged together that they could not extricate themselves from the throng to advance or retreat. While the bravest strove to rush on the enemy, the timid endeavoured to fall back on the next division, and the most awful chaos arose.

Still the English archers poured in their arrows, dropping multitudes at each discharge; and when their arrows failed they seized their battle-axes, and, leaving their stakes, rushed on with fierce cries. At this signal the men in ambush replied with similar shouts, and, falling on the flank of the French army, added immensely to the terror and disorder. While they showered their arrows in that direction, the archers in front hewed their way with their hatchets through all opposition. They dashed amid the steel-clad horsemen, burst through the whole array of horses and armour, slew the commander-in-chief and many of his most illustrious officers, and in a very short time, without any aid whatever from the men-at-arms, dispersed the whole of the first division.

The second division opened to receive the fugitives, which occasioned fresh disorder; and at this crisis, the Duke of Brabant, who had hastened on before his expected reinforcements, galloped up with a fresh body of horse, and charged the advancing archers. Those indomitable men, however, speedily cut him down, destroyed his detachment, and kept on their way, laying prostrate all before them. They soon arrived at the second division, who, though wallowing up to their horses' girths in the middle of a ploughed field, the men on foot being sunk by the weight of their armour almost up to their knees, yet kept their ground. At this moment Henry advanced with his men-at-arms; but, seeing the nature of the ground, he rallied his brave bowmen, who, having no weight to carry, could do active battle, even on that rotten ground. At his call they speedily re-formed, and under his command made a fresh charge.

It was now that the real battle took place. The Duke of Alençon, who with the Duke of Bar headed this division, had made a vow to kill or take captive the King of England, or to perish in the attempt. He led on his troops with

THE THANKSGIVING SERVICE ON THE FIELD OF AGINCOURT. (*See p.* 558.)

desperate valour, and a mortal struggle of two long hours took place. The English archers still wielded their massive axes in the front, and the French men-at-arms fought with undaunted bravery. Henry combated in the midst of his archers, who still plied their weapons with loud hurrahs, and, animated by battling under the eye of the king, seemed still as active and fresh as if they were just come into the strife. Henry's life, however, was repeatedly in danger. His brother, the Duke of Clarence, was thrown down near him, wounded, and in danger of being killed, when Henry rushed to his assistance, strode across the body, and beat off the assailants till the prince could be removed. But no sooner was Clarence in safety than a band of eighteen knights, headed by the Lord of Croy, confronted the king. They had sworn to each other to take or kill him.

One of these knights struck Henry with his battle-axe, and brought him to his knees; but his brave followers closed round him instantly, and slew every one of the assailants. The Duke of Alençon then fought his way to the royal standard. With one stroke of his battle-axe he beat the Duke of York to the ground, and killed him; with the next he cleft the crown on Henry's helmet. At that sight every arm was raised—every weapon was directed at him. He saw his imminent peril, and cried out to Henry, "I yield to you; I am Alençon!" Henry held out his hand, but it was already too late; the gallant duke lay dead.

Here the battle may be said to have ended; for though the third division, which was the most numerous of all, was still unbroken, at the sight of the Duke of Alençon's troops flying in all directions, they too fell back and began to waver. Another moment and they would have been in full flight, but in the rear of Henry's army, where the priests and baggage were posted, there rose a loud tumult, and messengers came galloping to say they were attacked by a large force. Henry immediately believed that this force was that expected hourly under the Duke of Brittany; and fearful of being surrounded, he immediately gave orders to kill all the prisoners, lest they should turn against them.

As they had taken their captives, who, after the death of Alençon, yielded in crowds, they removed their helmets, that, should any occasion arise, they might readily despatch them. The slaughter now made of these helpless men was terrible. Many fell without a chance of resistance, many others struggled and wrestled with their destroyers, but in vain. The scene was terrible, and the French third division, also becoming aware of the attack in the rear, took fresh courage, and prepared to make battle still. But a short time discovered the real cause of the alarm which the fears of the English had converted into a formidable assault. It was merely a body of peasants, who thought they would profit by the battle, and, while the combatants were in the heat of the action, drive off the English horses, which were all left with the baggage. They little dreamed that their scheme would prove so disastrous to their countrymen, many a noble French knight falling a victim to this stratagem, the authors of which were afterwards severely punished by their feudal lord, the Duke of Burgundy.

The mistake being discovered, Henry gave instant orders to stop the slaughter of the prisoners, and the third division of the French army also coming at the truth, galloped off the field at full speed.

Henry's little army was too much exhausted and too much encumbered with prisoners to be able to pursue the flying legions. He gave orders to see to the wounded, and then summoning the heralds, he traversed the fields, accompanied by his chief barons, and saw the coats of arms of the fallen princes and knights examined, and their names registered. While this was being done, and others were stripping the dead, he called to him the French king-at-arms, Mountjoye, who came attended by the other heralds, French and English, and he said, "We have not made this slaughter, but the Almighty, as we believe, for the sins of France." Then turning to Mountjoye, he asked, "To whom does the victory belong?" "To the King of England," replied Mountjoye, "and not to the King of France." "And what castle is that which I see at a distance?" continued Henry. "It is called the castle of Agincourt," replied the herald. "Then," said Henry, "since all battles ought to be named after the nearest castle, let this henceforth and lastingly bear the name of the battle of Agincourt."

Having named the field, and "lastingly," according to his own phrase, for it is a name which will stand for ever amongst the most wonderfully fought fields in all the annals of nations, Henry—as if impressed with what appeared to be his sincere idea that it was the work of Heaven, and that he was its instrument—called together the clergy, and ordered them to perform a service of thanksgiving on the field before the whole army. In allusion to their escape from the enemy and the terrible destruction of their assailants, they chanted the 114th Psalm :—"When Israel went forth out of Egypt:" and at the first verse of the 115th Psalm, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to Thy name give the glory," every man knelt on the ground. They then sang the *Te Deum*, and so closed the renowned battle of Agincourt.

Of all the battles ever fought by France up to that time none was ever so fatal as that of Agincourt. "Never did so many and so noble men fall in one battle," says their own chronicler, Monstrelet. It was a wholesale slaughter of its princes and nobles. Seven princes of the blood had fallen; the Constable D'Albret; the Dukes of Brabant, of Bar, and Alençon; the Count of Nevers, the brother of the Dukes of Burgundy and Brabant, the Counts of Marle and another brother, John, brothers of the Duke of Bar; the Count of Vaudemont, brother to the Duke of Lorraine, the Archbishop of Sens, the Count of Dampierre, the Lords Helly—who fell as Henry had promised him—of Rambure, Verchin, and Messire Guichard of Dauphiné, another of the deputies who were sent to Henry before the battle. On the whole there fell that day 10,000 men, amongst whom there was one marshal, thirteen earls, ninety-two barons, 1,500 knights, and 8,000 gentlemen.

There were 14,000 prisoners left in the hands of the English, amongst whom were the Dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, the Marshal Boucicault, the Counts of Eu, Vendôme, Richemont, Craon, and Harcourt, and 7,000 barons, knights, and gentlemen. No wonder that the news of so direful an overthrow, so unexampled a slaughter and capture of the aristocracy of the country, should spread consternation throughout France.

The highest estimate of the English loss puts it at 1,600, while Elmham contends that it was only 100, and other contemporary writers that it was only forty. Taking the highest estimate, it was a wonderful disparity between the loss of the conquerors and the conquered. The only persons of note who fell on the English side were the Earl of Suffolk and the Duke of York, a man whose whole life had been stained with treachery and meanness, and of which it might be said that its only honourable incident was its termination. Henry returned in triumph to England.

In the spring of the following year, 1416, Henry had the honour of a visit from Sigismund, King of the Romans, and Emperor Elect of Germany. The object of Sigismund was to secure Henry's aid in accomplishing his great scheme of putting an end to the division in the popedom, which was still raging. There were no less than three Popes all claiming to have been lawfully elected. Sigismund had visited France, and was flattered by cordial promises of co-operation by Charles and his ministers. Henry, who at this time was by far the most famous sovereign in Europe, was determined to receive Sigismund in a manner which should convince him that the wealth of his kingdom and the splendour of the English crown were in full correspondence with his fame. He summoned all the knights and esquires of the realm to attend him in London. A fleet of 300 sail waited at Calais to bring over this unusual guest with all his retinue, amounting to 1,000 horsemen; and officers were appointed to escort him from Dover to the capital, discharging all the expenses by the way.

Yet amidst his magnificent arrangements for the reception of his distinguished guest, Henry was cautious not to endanger in the slightest degree his national rights. Sigismund, while in Paris, had attended a cause which was pleaded before Parliament, and was in courtesy invited to occupy the throne, and while sitting there, had been so incautious as to knight an esquire who was in danger of suffering wrong because of his inferior rank. To prevent any such mistake, a precaution was taken which, for a moment, had an aspect anything but hospitable. No sooner did the Emperor's ship cast anchor, than Sigismund saw the Duke of Gloucester and several noblemen ride into the water with drawn swords, and demand to know whether in coming thus, he designed to exercise or claim any authority in England. On Sigismund replying in the negative, this hostile reception immediately gave way to one of courtesy and honour. Besides his main object, the settlement of the papal schism, Sigismund was also anxious to effect a peace between the kings of England and France; and accordingly he was accompanied by ambassadors from Charles, whose propositions were zealously seconded by William, Duke of Bavaria and Count of Hainault, who was become a warm admirer of Henry. It is said that Henry went to such a length of concession as to waive his claims on the crown, and content himself with the provisions of the treaty of Brétigny, concluded by Edward III. But even this would have dismembered France of its most valuable provinces; and, though Charles is stated to have given a full assent to the proposal, there were others who were more averse from such terms with England.

In the very midst of this apparently amicable negotiation, amid the frightful anarchy of France, the Count of Armagnac had now succeeded to the authority of the Dauphin Louis, recently dead, and being also Constable in the place of D'Albret, slain at Agincourt, he determined, if possible, to win popularity by wresting from England its recent conquest of Harfleur. He marched there with a large army, drew lines around the town, while a fleet of French ships, aided by a number of Genoese galleys, which he had hired, blockaded the harbour. It was in vain he was reminded of the negotiations pending at London; he determinedly rejected all proposals of truce or peace, and pressed on with all his characteristic ardour the siege of the place.

Henry, alarmed and indignant at the news of this investment at this moment, proposed, in his impetuous promptness, to rush across the Channel and fall on Armagnac in person; but Sigismund, his royal guest, suggested to him that it was not a cause of sufficient importance to demand his own presence. He sent the Duke of Bedford, his brother, with a fleet to the relief of Harfleur. The duke mustered at Rye such ships as he could procure in haste, and on the 14th of August, 1416, reached the mouth of the Seine. He found the blockade of a formidable character. The galleys of the Genoese were so tall that the loftiest of the duke's ships could not reach to their upper decks by more than a spear's length. Besides these, there were also Spanish ships of great size, and all were posted with great judgment. Nothing daunted, the duke resolved on attacking them in the morning. At sunset he summoned on board of his ship all the captains of his fleet to concert the plan of the battle, and during the night he kept his squadron together by displaying a light at his masthead.

The next morning, the 15th of August, 1416, Bedford was agreeably surprised to see the French quit their secure moorings, and, in their rash confidence, leave behind their powerful allies of Genoa and Spain, and come out into the open sea to attack him. He very soon captured two of their ships, and, after a long and desperate conflict, most of the rest were taken or destroyed; a few escaping up the river. Bedford lost no time in bearing down on the Genoese galleys, which, notwithstanding their height, his sailors clambered up like squirrels, and boarded in gallant style. The garrison within the town now joined their countrymen in an attack on the land forces, which speedily raised the siege and fled. The duke remained to see the town put into a complete state of defence; and during this time, which was three weeks, the vast number of bodies which had been plunged into the Seine during the fight, rose and covered the whole of the waters all round the ships, much to the horror of the sailors. The duke led his men away as soon as possible, and returned to England, having most successfully completed his mission.

In the following month of September, Henry proceeded to Calais—accompanied by his Imperial guest Sigismund, who had concluded an alliance with him, and been enrolled a Knight of the Garter, and by the Duke of Bavaria—to meet John Sanspeur, Duke of Burgundy. Burgundy, during the late campaign, had professed to remain neutral. Though summoned by Charles to assist in expelling the English, he neither went himself nor permitted his vassals to do so. His county of Flanders not only maintained an avowed neutrality with England, but carried on their usual lucrative trade with it without any regard to French interests. Yet Burgundy had been cautious not to enter into direct engagements with Henry, or to lend any assistance to his invading army. Nay, after the battle of Agincourt, where his brothers the Duke of Brabant and the Count of Nevers fell, he had expressed great resentment, and even defied Henry to mortal combat. But now circumstances had occurred in France which stung him to the quick, and made him ready to forget even the destruction of his brothers.

In spite of the national disaster of Agincourt, civil war continued to exist between the French factions. Burgundy was expelled and worsted by Armagnac, and he sought the aid of England.

There had been through the year continual correspondence between the courts of Burgundy and England, which purported to concern treaties of trade; and now the congress opened on the 3rd of October, 1416, for the ostensible purpose of healing the schism in the Church. The Armagnacs were struck with consternation at this conference. They would not give credit to the object being either trade or the peace of the Church; but they believed, and asserted, that Burgundy had sold himself to Henry, had formally acknowledged the latter's title to the throne of France, and done homage to him for his provinces of Burgundy and Alost, in order to avenge himself of his Armagnac opponents. That such a treaty was agitated at the congress is certain, for the protocol is preserved in Rymer, and by it Burgundy was not only to acknowledge Henry's claim, but to assist him in establishing it. There is, however, no proof that he actually signed it.

Whatever was determined upon remains unknown, any further than it can be surmised from what followed. Henry returned to England to make immediate and extensive preparations for the invasion of France, on the conclusion of the existing armistice. Sigismund went on to Constance in prosecution of his plans for the Church, and Burgundy retired to Valenciennes, as if also about to co-operate with Henry by the muster of his Flemish forces. But here a new and unexpected turn of affairs appears to have taken place. John, the new Dauphin, had thrown off the Armagnac party, and made overtures to Burgundy. The duke caught at the opportunity of having the Dauphin in his hands and, by such an alliance, regaining his ascendency in the state without incurring the odium of supporting a foreign invader against the rightful sovereign.

The two princes swore eternal friendship to each other. The Dauphin pledged himself to assist the duke in driving from power the Armagnacs, and the duke engaged to aid the Dauphin in expelling the English from France. The Armagnacs, confounded at this new coalition, issued a summons in the king's name to the Dauphin to return to Paris, with which the prince offered to comply on condition that he brought the Duke of Burgundy and his followers with him. Finding that they could not induce the prince to quit his new ally, there is every reason to believe that they despatched him with poison, for on the 14th of April, 1417, he was taken suddenly ill, and died in agonies with all the symptoms of death by poison. No one doubted that it was

RECEPTION OF THE EMPEROR SIGISMUND. (*See p.* 559.)

the work of the Armagnacs, and it was generally believed that the abandoned Queen Isabella was an active accomplice in the destruction of both this and her preceding son, whom she hated for their opposition and exposure of her flagitious life.

But if Isabella was guilty of these revolting crimes, she was speedily punished. Her youngest son, Charles, who now became Dauphin, though but sixteen, was extremely artful, and by no means disposed to yield to the domination of his mother, whom he as heartily despised as his elder brothers had done. Isabella herself was arrested and sent into close confinement at Tours. The Count of Armagnac is said to have the more willingly executed this severity on Isabella because she had violently complained of his seizure of her treasures both at Paris and Mélun, a measure to which the public necessities had driven him.

Enraged to frenzy by the loss of her favourite, of her power, and of her money, Isabella now meditated deep revenge. She had hated the Duke of Burgundy with a mortal hatred ever since he assassinated her beloved Duke of Orleans; and he had now added to his offences by implicating her in a manner in the murder of her own son, the Dauphin John. Yet the very next thing which the public heard was that Isabella had escaped from her prison at Tours, and thrown herself into the arms of the Duke of Burgundy, her old and most detested enemy. Such are the terrible extremes of a bad woman's vengeance. She now burned, at any cost, to revenge herself on Armagnac, and not less so on her own son Charles, whose destruction she sought as earnestly as she had done that of his brothers. This most unnatural woman had bribed her keepers to allow her to attend early mass at the church of Marmontier, in the suburbs of Tours. They accompanied her, but suddenly found themselves surprised by the Duke of Burgundy, who had secreted himself for the purpose in a neighbouring forest, with 800 men-at-arms. The moment Isabella was in the guardianship of this prince, she proclaimed herself regent of the kingdom during the continuance of the king's malady, and the Duke of Burgundy her lieutenant.

Such was the position of affairs in France at the moment that Henry V. of England landed at Honfleur, on the coast of Normandy, on the 14th of August, 1417, with 16,000 men-at-arms, an equal number of archers, and a long train of artillery, and other military engines, attended by an efficient body of sappers, miners, carpenters, and other artificers, and a fleet of 1,500 ships. Two years had elapsed since the fatal battle of Agincourt; yet the infatuated princes of France, though they knew that Henry never had his eyes off their country, but was constantly employed in planning its subjugation, had taken no measures whatever for its defence.* On the contrary, they had spent the time in mutual destruction, and in doing all in their power to exhaust its strength, and demoralise the people. They appeared given up by an indignant Providence to the destroying force of their own base passions, a nation of suicidal monsters rather than of men; and while Henry of England was landing on their coasts with his invading army, the Duke of Burgundy was in full march on Paris, accompanied by the queen, breathing vengeance on the Armagnacs.

Burgundy, after the sudden death of the Dauphin, had besieged that city with an army of 60,000 cavalry. He promised to restore peace and abolish all oppressive taxes. The people in the country were ready to look upon him as a deliverer; and many cities, including Amiens, Abbeville, Dourlens, Montreuil, and other towns in Picardy opened their gates to him. Paris, in the hands of the Armagnacs, made a steadfast resistance. He, however, became master of Châlons, Troyes, Auxerre, and on being joined by Isabella, most of the towns, except those taken by the King of England, declared for Burgundy and the queen. Isabella had a great seal engraved, and appointed her officers of state. She declared that the Armagnacs held the king and Dauphin prisoners in Paris, and were, therefore, traitors. She made Burgundy governor-general of the whole kingdom, appointed the Duke of Lorraine constable, and the Prince of Orange governor of Languedoc. There was a great flocking of princes and nobility to the queen's court, and thus there were established two royal parties and two courts, the one with the king and Dauphin in Paris, the other with the queen at Chartres. The people, elated by the promises of Burgundy, rose in many places and killed the tax-gatherers, crying, "Long live Burgundy, and no taxes!" They regarded every rich man as an Armagnac, for that was a good plea on which to plunder him; and thus passed the winter of 1417.

Meantime, Henry of England advanced into the heart of Normandy, having, on setting out, issued to his army orders in consonance with those enlightened principles of humanity and policy which he had adopted in such noble contrast to the practice of the Edwards. He forbade, on pain of the severest punishment, all breaches of discipline, all injury to the lives and property of the peaceable inhabitants, and especially all insult to clergymen, or outrage to the wives, widows, and maidens of the country. Yet the Normans, neglected by their own rulers, who were engaged like wolves in tearing each others' throats instead of defending their common soil, still retained their allegiance, and regarding Henry, not as the descendant of their ancient dukes, but as a foreign invader, rejected him with great bravery. Probably the atrocities committed on them by the Edwards had thoroughly alienated their hearts from the English. But they were unable to contend with the superior forces and martial skill of Henry; Caen resisted, but was taken by assault; Bayeux submitted voluntarily; and l'Aigle, Lisieux, Alençon, and Falaise, after some stout resistance. Henry then went into comfortable winter quarters, intending to proceed, on the return of spring, with his proposed task of reducing every fortress in Normandy.

While Henry was thus successfully prosecuting his campaign in Normandy, there had occurred a slight disturbance at home. The Scots, thinking that, the king being absent with the flower of the army, the kingdom must be left greatly unprotected, made a descent upon England. The Duke of Albany and Earl Douglas crossed the borders each with an army, and while Albany laid siege to the castle of Berwick, Douglas invested that of Roxburgh. But the Dukes of Exeter and Bedford, the regent, made a rapid march northward with such forces that the Scottish leaders suddenly abandoned their enterprise, and disbanded their armies.

Simultaneously with this inroad once more appeared Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, on the scene. He had been concealed in Wales, but the absence of the king afforded him also the expectation of taking vengeance on his enemies. It had been surmised that the Scots and Sir John had mutually concerted this attack. Be this, however, as it may, there can be no doubt that both Sir John and the Lollards in general were greatly embittered by the cruelties practised on them by the bishops. These dignitaries had set them the example of bloodshed, and had certainly taken the initiative in the attempt to put down difference of theological opinion by destroying their opponents, and during the three years that Lord Cobham had eluded them, they had pursued and burnt the Lollards with increasing severity. Such lessons are readily taught, and nothing could be more natural than that the injured party should seek retaliation in kind. Sir John, too, was probably deeply incensed by his old companion, the king, giving him over so forcibly to the tender mercies of the clergy; and, though they could not in this case assert that he sought his life, he probably felt little compunction in disturbing his Government in the endeavour to come at the official persecutors.

The hasty retreat of the Scots defeated the intentions of the Lollards, and Lord Cobham, hastening from his rendezvous near St. Albans, endeavoured to regain the Welsh mountains, but he was intercepted near Broniart, in Montgomeryshire, by the retainers of Sir Edward Charlton, Earl of Powis. When brought before the House of Peers, his former indictment was read, and he was asked by the Duke of Bedford what he had to say in his defence. He had begun a bold and able speech in reply, but being stopped and desired to give a direct answer, he refused to plead, declaring that there was no authority in that court so long as Richard II. was alive in Scotland; for, like many others, he was of opinion that the Scottish Richard was genuine. He was at once condemned, and was hanged as a traitor in St. Giles's Fields, and burnt as a heretic, December, 1417.

In the spring of 1418 Henry resumed his operations in Normandy with vigour. He had received a reinforcement of 15,000 men, so that he could divide his troops, and conduct several operations at the same time. The Dukes of Gloucester and Clarence, the king's brothers, took the command of different bodies of men, and proceeded to reduce the strongest towns in Lower Normandy. Gloucester compelled Cherbourg to surrender, after a long and obstinate defence, on the 29th of September; but before this most of the towns of Lower Normandy had opened their gates. Henry advanced along the Seine and made himself master of the whole country from Louviers to the sea; finding, in this part of his campaign, infinite advantage from his conquest of Harfleur. Pont de l'Arche completed the possession of all Lower Normandy, with the exception of Cherbourg, which Gloucester was blockading. By July, making certain of the ultimate fall of this city, Henry regarded Lower Normandy as his own. Before proceeding to the siege of Rouen, he organised a Government for Lower Normandy, appointed a chancellor and treasurer, and left that part of France, though under foreign rule, far quieter and more habitable than any other district of the realm.

The siege of Rouen was the grand operation which was not only to lay all Normandy at the feet of the conqueror, but open the highway to Paris. The city was strongly fortified. On all sides it was enclosed by massive ramparts, towers, and batteries. Fifteen thousand trained men, and a garrison of 4,000 men-at-arms were collected within it. Many of these were gentlemen of Lower Normandy, who, having vainly endeavoured to check the progress of the enemy in their own neighbourhood, had retired hither to assist in making one last determined stand against the power which had driven them from hearth and home. The governor had made every preparation for the most obstinate resistance. Not only had he laid waste the environs and annihilated the suburbs, but he had commanded every man and every family to quit the city who had not provisions for ten months, and the magistrates had enforced the order.

VIEW OF ROUEN, FROM ST. CATHERINE'S HILL.
[*Photo: Neurdein Frères, Paris.*]

On the 30th of July Henry appeared before the town. He had 200 sail of small vessels on the Seine, so that he could convey his troops to any portion of the environs. He found the brave and patriotic Bouteillier ready to encounter him. Instead of lying concealed behind his strong walls, this leader met him in the open field, and attacked him with the utmost impetuosity. The battle was desperate and bloody, and though ultimately compelled, by the numbers and the tried valour of the English, to retire, he never ceased to renew the attack, and interrupt the commencement of Henry's works for the investment of the place. He continually made fierce sorties, destroyed his embankments, beat up the quarters of the soldiers now here, now there, and greatly obstructed the operations of the besiegers.

At length Henry succeeded in encamping his army in six divisions before the six gates of the city. He protected these by lofty embankments from the shot from the city, and connected them with each other by deep trenches, so that the men could pass from one to the other without danger from the arrows of the enemy. Then, finally, the whole town on the land sides was enclosed in strong military lines, which he strengthened with thick hedges of thorns and on the most commanding situations without the camp he placed towers of wood, batteries of cannon, and engines for the projection of arrows and stones.

These stringent measures soon began to tell. Before two instead of ten months had expired, famine had shown its hideous face. Though the governor had reduced the population greatly before the siege had commenced, he now expelled from the city 12,000 more useless mouths, as they

CARDINAL ORSINI'S VISIT TO HENRY. (*See p. 566.*)

were termed in the iron language of war. Henry forbade them to be admitted within the lines, for the tender mercies of sieges are cruel under the most humane of commanders. To permit at will the expulsion of the people was to prolong the siege, and, therefore, as at Calais, under Edward I., notwithstanding some of these wretched outcasts were fed by the humanity of the troops, the greater number perished through want of food and shelter.

But within the city famine stalked on, and the misery was terrible. During the third month the besieged killed and subsisted on their horses. After that, for two months, they killed the dogs and cats; and the necessity growing more and more desperate, they descended to rats, mice, and any species of vermin they could clutch in their famine-sharpened fingers. It is said that, in the whole siege—from famine, from the wretched, unwholesome food eaten, by the sword, and other means—no less than 50,000 of the inhabitants perished.

All this time the unhappy people cried vehemently to the Duke of Burgundy, whom the citizens had admitted to Paris and who had established his power there by a series of fearful massacres. Their messengers returned with flattering but fallacious promises, and no relief was ever sent. On one occasion the heartless minister even fixed the precise day on which he would arrive in force and compel the English to raise the siege. At this news a wild joy ran like lightning through the famishing city. The bells were rung with mad exultation; people ran to and fro spreading the glad tidings and uttering mutual congratulations. The troops were ordered to be every man in readiness to rush forth at the right moment, and second the assault of their friends without. The day came and went; no deliverer appeared, and a deadly despair sank down on the devoted city.

It was in the midst of these horrors that the Cardinal Orsini, who had in vain exerted himself to reconcile the insensate factions, now turned to Henry, and entreated him to moderate his pretensions, and incline to peace. But Henry was too sagacious a politician to renounce the advantages which the folly and crimes of his enemies opened up to him. He was willing to make overtures of peace, and he did so to both parties, but it was still on his fixed terms of the sovereignty of France. He repeated his clear persuasion that his work was the work of an avenging Providence. "Do you not perceive," he said to Orsini, "that it is God who has led me hither by the hand? France has no sovereign. There is nothing here but confusion; there is no law, no order. No one thinks of resisting me. Can I, therefore, have a more convincing proof that the Being who disposes of empires, has determined to put the crown of France upon my head?"

Winter was now setting in, and the famished citizens saw its approach with horror. They had long been reduced to the severest condition of starvation, and still the determined Bouteillier held out. They had consumed every green and every living thing but themselves and their children. Gaunt Famine, the sternest of all conquerors, now subdued the iron hardihood of the governor, and he offered on the 3rd of January to capitulate; but Henry insisted on unconditional surrender. Bouteillier, indignant and in despair, assembled the garrison, and proposed to them to set fire to the city, to throw down a portion of the wall, which was already undermined by the English, and burst headlong into the camp of the enemy, where, if they could not cut their way through, they should at least perish as became soldiers. This stoical design, as terribly sublime as any project of antiquity, reaching the ears of Henry, he lowered his demands. It was impossible not to be struck with such heroism in men wasted by months of utter want, and he had no wish to see Rouen a heap of smoking ruins. He offered the soldiers their lives and liberties on condition that they did not serve against him for twelve months; and he guaranteed to the citizens their property and their franchises on the payment of 300,000 crowns. On the 13th of January, 1419, the terms of surrender were signed, and on the 19th Henry entered the city in triumph. To his honour he strictly observed the treaty, suffering no infringement of the citizens' rights, nor displaying any signs of vengeance. The only person exempted from this clemency was a priest who had, during the siege, excommunicated him, and pronounced the direst curses upon him. Him he imprisoned for life; and a captain of the city militia was executed, a few days after the entrance of the city, for treasonable designs.

The surrender of Rouen was a shock to the whole kingdom of France, sufficient, one would have thought, to bring the contending factions to a pause, and unite them for the protection of their common country; but for a time it appeared to produce little effect on the rival parties themselves. The people at large were struck with consternation, and loudly complained that they were made the victims of the vices and jealousies of their rulers. The people of Paris saw with indignation the Duke of Burgundy and the queen flee out of the city, carrying the king with them, and establish their headquarters at Lagny. They looked upon themselves as basely betrayed, and declared that the capital had been left exposed to the arms of the victor, who, it was well known, was preparing to march along the Seine and invest the city with all his forces. They said that the people of the provincial towns had been left to fight their own battles; and now Paris was abandoned to its fate in the same scandalous manner. The most vehement representations were made to the heads of the hostile factions to settle their quarrels and combine to repulse the invader. This wise counsel was wholly thrown away. Neither party showed any disposition to reconciliation, but each hastened to open negotiations with Henry of England, in order, by his means, to be able to crush the other.

The Duke of Burgundy, who always courted popularity, endeavoured to pacify the Parisians by issuing a proclamation, assuring them that he was doing all in his power to remove the impediments to peace and the settlement of the country. All, however, that was visible, was that he sent an embassy to Henry at Rouen, proposing to attempt terms of agreement betwixt him and France. The Dauphin, on his part, went further, and offered to meet Henry, and endeavour personally to accommodate matters. Henry listened courteously to both parties, accepting their proposals with the utmost frankness, at the same time that he promised nothing. The Dauphin, however, himself of a treacherous disposition, hesitated to put himself into the power of Henry, and failed to keep his appointment. Burgundy was no sooner informed of this, than availing himself of it, as a favourable opportunity on his side, he sent a fresh deputation to Rouen; armed, as he believed, with peculiar temptations. These were a beautiful portrait of the Princess Catherine, accompanied by a message from the queen, her mother, significantly asking whether so charming a princess really needed so great a dowry as he demanded with her. The ambassadors reported on their return that they found the young conqueror at Rouen "as proud as a lion;" that he took the portrait of Catherine, gazed long and earnestly upon it, acknowledged that it certainly was beautiful; but refused to abate a jot of his demands. What was still more decisive was the news that he had left Rouen, recrossed the Seine, and had advanced along its banks already as far as Mantes, within fifty miles of Paris.

It was arranged that the Kings of England and France, accompanied by Burgundy, Isabella, and Catherine, on the part of France, and the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester on that of England, should meet on the banks of the Seine, near Melun. The meeting was, however, productive of no result, owing to the magnitude of Henry's demands. These were, first and foremost, the hand of the princess; then the full possession of Normandy, with all his other conquests, in addition to the territories ceded by the Peace of Brétigny; the whole to be held in absolute independence of the crown of France.

The queen and Burgundy demanded four days to deliberate on these sweeping requisitions When they met again they made no decided objection to them, but they brought forward a string of counter-claims, eight in number, regarding the relinquishment of these territories, the amount of dowry, and the payment of debts. Henry began to flatter himself that the necessities of the French court were in reality about to compel them to concede his extraordinary terms. He set himself earnestly to work to meet these objections, to modify, and even to contract, in some degree, his demands. But he was not long in perceiving that no progress was made. Difficulties were started at each conference, which were seized upon to seek further consultation, further explanations; and he perceived at the end of a month that only seven meetings had been held, between each of which the intervals were growing longer and longer. The princess, in spite of his inquiries, was not permitted to appear, and the indignant monarch at length broke out in wrathful language to Burgundy, the only person now sent to the conference, saying—"I tell you, fair cousin, that we *will* have the daughter of your king to wife, and will have her on our own terms, or we will drive both him and you out of this kingdom." The astute Burgundy replied, "Sire, you are pleased to say so; but I make no doubt that, before you have succeeded in driving us out, you will be heartily tired."

All this denoted that a new game was being played behind the scenes. The fact was, that the Dauphin and the Armagnacs had become greatly alarmed at the apparent progress towards an alliance between the royal party and Henry of England. If it succeeded they were to be crushed. Every engine was instantly put in motion to defeat this object. Overtures for reconciliation were made to Burgundy and the queen; means had been found to purchase the interest of an artful and abandoned woman, a Madame de Giac, the mistress of Burgundy, who, attended by several of the leaders of the Armagnac party, had been going to and fro between the Dauphin's retreat and Pontoise. It was represented that it was far better for the French princes to arrange their own differences than to admit the great enemy of the nation, who would only cajole one party in order to destroy both. Accordingly, when Henry—determined to dally no longer—insisted on a final meeting, he went to the tent of conference at the day and hour appointed, and found—nobody. The queen, Burgundy, and the Dauphin had patched up a reconciliation, and dropped the mask unceremoniously at the feet of the insulted King of England. The reconciled princes met on the road at Pouilli-le-Fort, and there, with all outward signs of affection, embraced and vowed eternal amity for the good of France.

The indignation and chagrin of Henry may be imagined. Independently of the promised bride and sovereignty over a vast portion of France being thus rudely snatched from him, his position was by no means encouraging. He had only about 25,000 men to enable him to hold his conquests and to pursue them to completion. Whilst Burgundy and the Dauphin were uniting all the power of France to oppose him, his own subjects at home were beginning to grumble at the expenditure of the war, and, as they saw it likely to succeed in reducing France, to look with dismay on such a result as likely to remove the seat of government to Paris, and make a province of England. The Scots, he found, were at the same time entering into treaty with the Dauphin against him, and the Kings of Castile and Aragon had already fitted out a great armament, with which they scoured the coasts of Guienne and menaced Bayonne.

The French were in ecstasies of delight at the turn which affairs had taken; in every quarter of the kingdom vigorous efforts were made to take advantage of it, and the army of Henry was proportionably depressed.

But Henry—though, in addition to this insolent display of perfidy, his treasury was very low—never for a moment suffered an air of doubt or despondency to shade his countenance, much less an expression of it to escape him. He immediately ordered his army to advance on Paris, crossed the Seine, fell on the town of Pontoise, and took it. The leaders of the Burgundian party, after accomplishing their agreement with the Dauphin, had quitted it, and Burgundy himself was at St. Denis; but even there he did not deem himself safe, and hastily retreated to Troyes, carrying the poor King of France with him.

In the meantime, the victorious troops of Henry appeared before the gates of the capital, which was left almost destitute of soldiers, and must soon fall into the hands of the enemy if not relieved. The English beat up the whole neighbourhood, and seized the supplies which should have entered the city, where famine and fever were the only reigning powers. So far from any real union having taken place betwixt the Burgundians and the Dauphin, they were paralysed by Henry's rapid pursuit of them, and were too conscious of internal hatred and treachery to approach each other. Two months had already elapsed since the much-vaunted union, and Burgundy was still unavailingly entreating the Dauphin to join his father's council at Troyes, and the Dauphin recommending Burgundy and the queen to meet him at Montereau-sur-Yonne. As neither would move, the influence of Madame de Giac was again invoked, who succeeded in prevailing on the duke to go as far as Bray-sur-Seine, only two leagues from Montereau. Having succeeded so far, fitting instruments were then chosen to induce the unfortunate Burgundy to proceed to Montereau to an interview with the Dauphin, for that base prince would not budge a step out of his safe quarters to bring about this necessary interview. At length a meeting was arranged by Tannegui du Châtel, a leading Orleanist.

On approaching the town, Burgundy sent to announce to the Dauphin his arrival, when he was speedily attended by Tannegui du Châtel, who brought him from the Dauphin the most solemn assurances, "on the word of a prince," that no injury should be offered to him or his. It was agreed that he should take only ten knights with him, and that the Dauphin should bring only the same number on his side. The meeting was to take place on the bridge, which was to be guarded at the end by which he entered by his own troops, and at the other by those of the Dauphin. Before proceeding, the duke learned that three barriers were drawn across the bridge with a gate in each; this appeared to excite his suspicion, and at this moment one of his valets, who had been into the castle to make preparations for the reception of the duke and his train, came in haste and warned him not to go upon the bridge, as he would assuredly be slain or taken prisoner. On this the duke, turning to Tannegui, said, "How is this? You have pledged your honour for our safety, but do you say true?" The traitor swore he would die himself rather than permit any injury to the duke, and the unfortunate victim went on. Yet again, as he had dismounted, and was walking to the bridge, another of his servants rushed up and implored him to remain, for he had seen throngs of armed men collecting on the other side of the river. On this the duke paused, and sent forward the Sieur de Giac to see if it were so, but the false man reported that the whole was a fiction: and Tannegui urged the duke to make haste, for his master had been waiting for him more than an hour. This decided the matter; the duke hurried forward, and no sooner had he passed the first gate on the bridge with his attendants, than it was closed and secured behind him, and so the second. Once more the suspicions of the duke being roused, he laid his hand on Tannegui, and said, "Here is what I trust in." It was a deadly trust. "Let us hasten," said Tannegui, "to my lord the Dauphin." They pushed forward towards the next barrier, where the Dauphin was standing, and on the duke kneeling with his velvet cap in his hand, he was suddenly struck down from behind by the villain who had lured him on by every sacred assurance. He was speedily despatched; one of his followers, the Sieur de Navailles, was killed also by Tannegui as he attempted to defend his master. The Lord of Neufchâtel darted away, sprang over the barriers, and escaped; the rest of the attendants were surrounded, overpowered, and seized. While this

HENRY'S WOOING OF THE PRINCESS CATHERINE.

was going on, the soldiers of the Dauphin, of whom Burgundy had been warned by his faithful servants, rushed from their hiding-place, scoured over the bridge, and fell upon the duke's followers. These, thus taken by surprise, fled, and got back to Bray.

The horror which this most detestable deed excited throughout France, familiar as it was with crimes and tragedies, was intense. One burst of execration was heard throughout the country against the Dauphin. That a young man of seventeen could stand calmly and see so vile a murder perpetrated—a murder which, it was plain, had been planned in his own councils—promised but a gloomy future to France. The people vowed to renounce all allegiance to him, or regard for his power. The Parisians in particular swore vengeance on him and his accomplices. They demanded a truce of the English, sent in all haste for the Count of Charolais, the son of their murdered leader, and demanded immediate alliance with the English, as the most certain means of exterminating the diabolical faction of the Dauphin.

This storm of indignant contempt aroused the Dauphin to vindicate his concern in the affair. He issued a proclamation, declaring that the Duke of Burgundy had made an attempt upon his (the Dauphin's) life, and had been slain by his attendants in defence of their prince. But this was so notoriously false that it only deepened the scorn of the public against him; and his more honest followers went about boasting of the deed as a grand stratagem and a truly glorious exploit.

Meantime, Philip, the new Duke of Burgundy, afterwards so well known by the title of Philip the Good, received the news of his father's assassination at Ghent, and immediately set out to take vengeance for it. He was married to a sister of the Dauphin, and exclaimed bluntly, on learning the bloody fact, "Michelle, your brother has murdered my father!" The duke had been very popular with his Flemish subjects, and with one voice they vowed to support his heir in punishing to the utmost the assassins. At Arras the new duke was met by deputations from Isabella, from the city of Paris, and from his own Burgundian subjects, all offering alliance and support in his righteous work of retribution.

The duke at once made overtures to Henry of England, as the certain means of crushing the Dauphin and his furious partisans. Henry proposed, as the price of his co-operation, the hand of the Princess Catherine, that he should be announced as regent of the kingdom, and as the successor to Charles, setting wholly aside the Dauphin. These terms were at once accepted, placing Henry at the height of his ambition, for nothing was too dear for the vengeance required. Within two weeks these preliminaries were signed, but the minor points occupied five months, and, in fact, were the business of the whole winter. These were that Henry should settle on Catherine 20,000 nobles, the usual income of an English queen; that during his regency he should govern with the advice of a council of Frenchmen; lay aside the title of King of France during the present king's life; should re-annex Normandy to the crown of France on ascending the throne, and conquer the territories held by the Dauphin for the benefit of the king, his father. He was bound to preserve the Parliaments and nobles, the charters of all cities, and the liberties and privileges of all classes of subjects, as they then existed; and to administer justice according to the laws and customs of the realm.

It was, moreover, stipulated between Henry and the Duke of Burgundy, that the Duke of Bedford, one of the king's brothers, should marry a sister of Burgundy; that together the king and the duke should pursue the Dauphin and the other murderers; and that Henry should on no account allow the Dauphin to go out of his hands, if he took him, without the consent of the duke. Besides this, Henry was to settle on Burgundy and his duchess, Michelle, lands in France of the annual value of 20,000 livres.

Accompanied by 16,000 men-at-arms, Henry entered Troyes, where the French court was, on the 30th of May, 1419, and the next day "the perpetual peace" was ratified by Isabella and Philip of Burgundy as the commissioners of Charles. The treaty was accepted with the most apparent alacrity and unanimity by the Estates General, the nobles, the heads of the church, the municipality, and all the corporate bodies of Paris. The highest eulogiums were pronounced by the Government authorities on Henry. He was declared, in addresses to the public bodies, to be a most wise and virtuous prince, *a lover of peace* and justice; a prince who maintained the most admirable discipline in his army, driving thence all lewd women, and protecting the women and the poor of the country from injury and insult; and a fast friend of the Church and of learning. Equal laudation was bestowed on his piety and the graces of his person. In short, there was no virtue and no advantage which they did not attribute to him; and though much of this was true, the whole had such an air of the sycophancy of an unprincipled court, as deprived it of any real value. Under all this yet lurked the feeling, especially in the people, that Henry was still a foreigner, and that France had ceased to be an independent country.

Henry conducted the queen and princess to the high altar, and the young couple were there affianced, and "on the 3rd of June, Trinity Sunday," says Monstrelet, "the King of England wedded the Lady Catherine, at Troyes, in the parish church, near which he lodged. Great pomp and magnificence were displayed by him and his princes, as if he had been king of the whole world." The next day he gave a splendid entertainment, where the knights of both nations preparing a series of tournaments in honour of the marriage, Henry, continues Monstrelet, said, "I pray my lord the king to permit, and I command his servants and mine to be all ready by to-morrow morning to go and lay siege to Sens, wherein are our enemies. There every man may have jousting and tourneying enough, and may give proof of his prowess; for there is no finer prowess than that of doing justice on the wicked, in order that poor people may breathe and live."

On the second day after his marriage he accordingly set out on his march to Sens, carrying his young queen with him. In two days Sens opened its gates, and the king and queen entered it in state. The Archbishop of Sens, who married him, had been expelled from his diocese by the Armagnacs, and Henry had the pleasure of reinstating him, which he did in this graceful manner:—"Now, my Lord Archbishop, we are quits; you gave me my wife the other day, and I this day restore you to yours."

From Sens he marched upon Montereau, accompanied by the Duke of Burgundy, who was particularly anxious to reduce and punish the governor, who had assisted at the murder of his father. Montereau made a desperate, but not a long resistance. During this siege, Henry's bride resided with her father and mother and their court at Bray-sur-Seine, where Henry visited them.

From Montereau the united forces of England and France proceeded to Villeneuve-le-Roy, and thence to Mélun, which resisted all their efforts for four months. The Dauphin had escaped into Languedoc, where he joined the young Count Armagnac, who had a strong party there. But Barbazan, the governor of Mélun, was one of the men suspected of being engaged in the murder of the Duke of Burgundy, and the present duke was eager to secure him and other of his accomplices. Henry, therefore, excepted in the terms of capitulation all such as were participators in the guilt of that deed; but, on surrender, he interceded for Barbazan, and saved his life.

During this obstinate siege, which continued till the 18th of November, the court resided at Corbeil, where the poor old King of France was accustomed to have his melancholy soothed by the fine military band of his English son-in-law—the first expressly mentioned in history. The siege over, the two courts and all their attendants returned in a species of triumph to Paris. Henry and his father-in-law went first, as a matter of precaution, and made their entry into the city accompanied by a strong body of troops. The place was in a state of absolute starvation—to such a condition had the protracted civil war and the many massacres and riots which had taken place within and around its walls reduced it. Children were running through the streets in the agonies of famine, and old and young were actually perishing on the pavement. Yet, amid all its horrors and miseries, this strange capital put on an air of high rejoicing. The streets and houses were hung with tapestry and gay carpets, and if there was little to eat, the conduits were made to run with wine. The entrance of the two kings side by side was something like that of Saul and David into Jerusalem. The acclamations of the multitude were chiefly directed towards the hero of Agincourt. At the sight of him the people seemed to think themselves almost in possession of the wealth and the fat beeves of England. The principal citizens appeared wearing the red cross, the badge of the English; and the clergy in solemn procession chanted, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." The next day the two queens made their entry amid similar pageants and acclamations.

Charles summoned the three estates of the kingdom, and explained to them in a long speech the reasons which had induced him to make "a final and perpetual peace with his dear son, the King of England." The assembly gave its unanimous approbation to the treaty, and after that the Duke of Burgundy, apparelled in deep mourning, appeared before them, and demanded justice on the assassins of his father. The king pronounced judgment against them, as guilty of high treason, and they were proclaimed incapable of holding any office or property, their vassals, at the same time, being absolved from all their oaths of fealty and obligations of service. The Dauphin was mentioned as "Charles, calling himself Dauphin"; but he was not directly implicated as the author or abettor of the crime.

At this assembly Isabella was also proclaimed regent of France during the absence of Henry, who now proceeded to England, there to introduce his queen to his subjects and to see her crowned. The whole of this journey and the coronation was like the ovation of an ancient conqueror. After spending their Christmas at Paris, Henry and his young queen set out at the head of 6,000 men, commanded by the Duke of Bedford. They were received with great festivity at the different towns on their way; and on the 1st of February they left Calais, and landed at Dover, where, according to Monstrelet, "Catherine was received as if she had been an angel of God." The whole reception of the young conqueror and his beautiful bride was of the most enthusiastic kind. They proceeded first to Eltham, and thence, after due rest, to London, where Catherine was crowned with high state, on the 24th of February, 1421.

After the coronation, the royal pair made a progress northward as far as the shrine of St. John of Beverley. But here Henry's gay progress was cut short by the disastrous news of the defeat of his troops in France at the battle of Beaugé. Henry had left his brother, the Duke of Clarence, in command of his forces in Normandy, and Clarence, intending to strike a blow at the power of the Dauphin in Anjou, marched into that country, and fell in, not only with the Armagnacs, but with a body of 6,000 or 7,000 auxiliary Scots, near the town of Beaugé. These Scots had been engaged by the Armagnac party to serve against the English as a fitting counterpart. They were commanded by the Earl of Buchan, second son of the Duke of Albany, the Regent of Scotland. He had under him the Earl of Wigton, Lord Stuart of Darnley, Sir John Swinton, and other brave officers. The Duke of Clarence, deceived by the false report of some prisoners, hastened to surprise what he regarded as an inconsiderable body of troops. In his rash haste, and in opposition to the earnest advice of his officers, he left behind him his archers, and thus gave another convincing proof that in that force, and not in the men-at-arms, lay the secret of the English victories. He was assured that the Scots were keeping very indifferent watch and discipline, and made sure of securing an easy conquest. Having forced the passage of a bridge, Clarence was dashing on at the head of his cavalry, distinguished by a magnificent suit of armour, and a coronet of gold set with jewels, when he was met by the Scottish knights in full charge. Sir John Swinton spurred his horse right upon the duke, and bore him from his saddle with his lance, and the Earl of Buchan, as he fell, dashed out his brains with his battle-axe. The archers, however, came up in time to prevent the Scots from carrying off the body, and they speedily cleared the field with their clothyard shafts. In this encounter the English lost about 1,200 men, and had 300 taken prisoners; the Scots and French lost together about 1,000 men. The moral effect of this battle was immense. Though the victory actually remained with the English, yet the impression which the Scots made before the arrival of the archers, and their having killed the royal duke, the brother of the victorious Henry, and the Governor of Normandy, and having taken prisoner the Earls of Somerset, Dorset, and Huntingdon, seemed to point them out as the only soldiers in the world capable of contending with the English. Pope Martin V., when this news reached him, exclaimed, "Ha! the Scots are the only antidote to the English!" The joy of the Dauphin's party at this first gleam of success for many years over the dreaded islanders, was ecstatic. He created the Earl of Buchan Constable of France, the highest office of the kingdom, and Count of Aubigny.

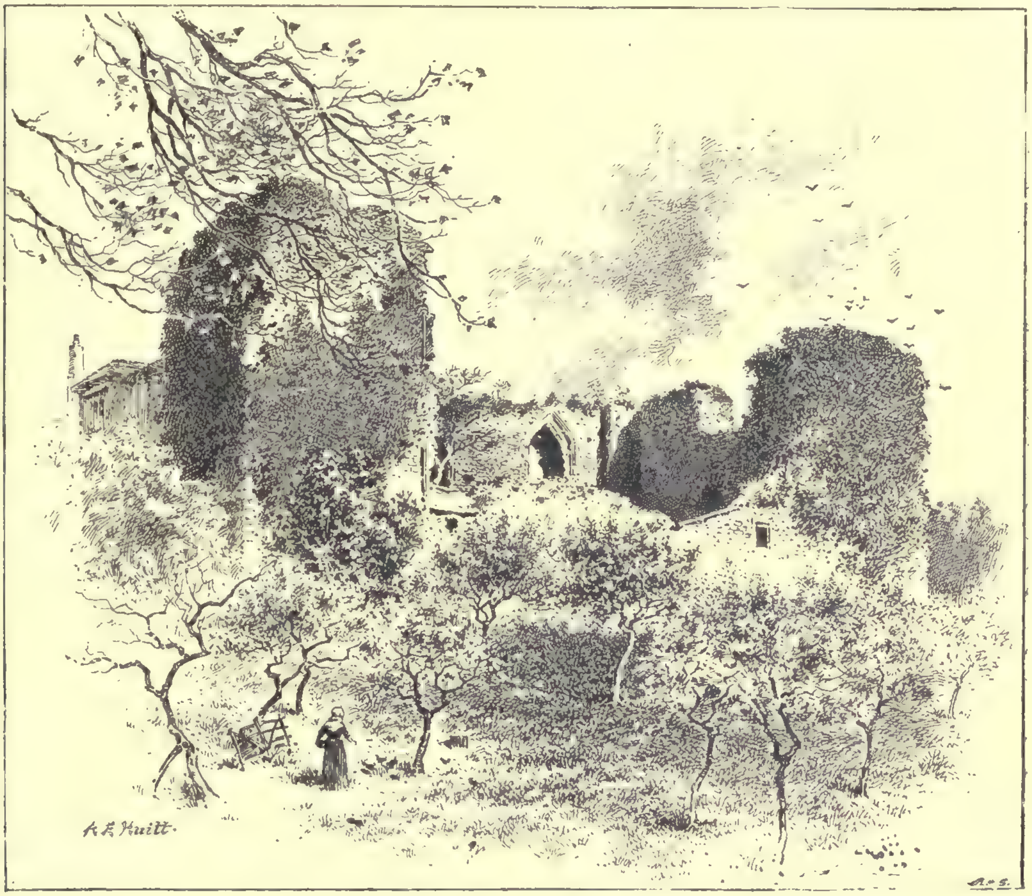
The fame of this exploit on the field of Beaugé, and of the rewards showered in consequence on their countrymen, roused the martial Scots, and they poured over in large numbers into France. The spell of England's invincibility seemed for a moment broken, and enemies began to start up in various quarters. Jacques de Harcourt issued from his castle of Crotoy, in Picardy, and harassed the English both at sea and on shore. Poitou de Saintrailles and Vignolles, called La Hire, also infested Picardy. The fickle Parisians, who so lately shouted and carolled on the entrance of Henry into their city, now openly expressed their discontent, and proceeded to such lengths, that the English commander there, the Duke of Exeter, was compelled to drive them from the streets with his inimitable archers. The Dauphin, taking courage from all these circumstances, began to advance from the south towards the capital.

Henry, greatly chagrined at these events—calculated, if not stopped, to add infinitely to the difficulties in the path of his ambition—lost no time in preparing to reach the scene of action. He ordered troops to assemble with all celerity at Dover. He called together Parliament and

Convocation, both of which met his views with the greatest alacrity. Parliament ratified at once the treaty of Troyes, and authorised his council to raise loans on its own security. The clergy granted him a tenth. To take a signal vengeance on the Scots, whose valour and the rashness of Clarence had thus broken in on his triumphs and enjoyments at home, he called on the young King of Scots to fulfil his engagement to serve in France under his banners; the condition being his return to Scotland three months after the termination of the campaign. Henry deemed that by this measure he should not only put Scot against Scot, but should, by having the Scottish king with him, deter any of his subjects from taking arms on the other side, and thus actually fighting against their own monarch. In this hope he was disappointed; but as the Scots had entered the French service without any declaration of war made by Scotland against England, the presence of the Scottish king on his side furnished him with the plea of treating every Scot who did battle on the other side as a traitor; and he sullied his fair fame when he came into the field by hanging every such Scot as fell into his hands.

Henry saw there collected under his banner a gallant army of 4,000 men-at-arms and 24,000 archers. With these he landed at Calais on the 12th of June, sent on 1,200 men-at-arms by forced marches to Paris, to strengthen the garrison of the Duke of Exeter, and followed himself at more leisure. At Montreuil he met the Duke of Burgundy, and arranged the plans of action. Burgundy, in consequence, marched into Picardy, attacked and defeated the Dauphinites, and took Saintrailles and others of their bravest leaders prisoners. This revived the spirit of the royalists, and they speedily reduced various other places in the north-west.

Henry left the army under command of the Earl



MONMOUTH CASTLE, BIRTHPLACE OF HENRY V.

(From a photograph by R. Tudor Williams, Monmouth.)

of Dorset, and hastening to Paris, paid a hasty visit to his father-in-law at the Bois de Vincennes. He then joined the army and advanced against Chartres, which was besieged by the Dauphin. The siege of Chartres was raised at Henry's approach, Beaugency was next taken, and the Dauphin retreated beyond the Loire. In the meantime the King of Scots, to whom Henry had assigned the siege of Dreux, prosecuted his mission with equal zeal and talent, and brought that strong place to capitulate on the 30th of August.

The whole of France, from the north to Paris, and from Paris to the Loire, was almost entirely in the hands of the English and their allies the Burgundians. The Dauphin, unable to stand a moment before the superior genius and troops of Henry, fell back successively from post to post, till he took refuge in the well-fortified city of Bourges. The troops of Henry had suffered considerably by their rapid marches and from scarcity of provisions. Henry, therefore, abandoned the pursuit of the Dauphin for a while; the country, from its past calamities, still lying a desert, and the miserable people perishing of hunger. He sought out sufficiently good quarters for his army, and left them to refresh themselves while he paid a short visit to Paris. He was very soon, however, in the field again, and by the 6th of October had sat down before the city of Meaux on the Marne. He was induced to undertake this siege from the earnest solicitations of the people of Paris. They represented that it was the stronghold of one of the most ferocious monsters who in those fearful times spread horror through afflicted France. This was an old companion of the late Count of Armagnac, called the Bastard of Vaurus, who had become so infuriated by the murder of his master, that the whole of mankind hardly seemed sufficient to appease, by death and suffering, his revenge. It cost Henry ten weeks to carry the town; and then the monster of Vaurus retired with his garrison to the market-place, which defied all the efforts of the English and their allies. The siege was carried on with sanguinary fury; no quarter was given on either side. On the 10th of May, 1422, the market-place was compelled to surrender from absolute famine; though the Dauphin had despatched the Sieur d'Affemont to endeavour to throw supplies into this fortress. Affemont was taken prisoner, and the place fell. The Bastard of Vaurus was beheaded, his body hung up on his own oak, and his banner, surmounted with his head, was attached to its highest bough. Three of his chief companions, who had vied with him in violence and ferocity, were executed with him; and a number of persons, suspected of being accessory to the death of the Duke of Burgundy, were marched to Paris to take their trials.

Henry had spent seven months in these operations. They had cost him a great number of his brave soldiers, and some of his most tried officers—amongst them the Earl of Worcester and Lord Clifford, who fell before the walls of Meaux. Sickness swept away many others; but the advantages of the reduction of Meaux were as distinguished as the cost; for it laid all the north of France as far as the Loire, with the exception of Maine, Anjou, and a few castles in Picardy, under his dominion. Whilst he lay before Meaux, however, he received the joyful intelligence of the safe delivery of his queen of a son, who had received his own name; the Duke of Bedford, the Bishop of Winchester, and Jacqueline, Countess of Hainault and Holland—who proved the cause of many misfortunes to the infant prince—being sponsors at his baptism.

One thing, however, troubled his joy on this auspicious event. Henry had probably studied the so-called science of astrology at Oxford, for it was part of the mass of rubbish regarded as real knowledge at that time. On leaving England, therefore, he strictly enjoined Catherine not to lie in at Windsor, for he had ascertained that the planets cast forward a lowering shadow upon Windsor, in the week when she might expect her confinement. From waywardness, or some other cause, Catherine specially chose as the place of her accouchement the forbidden spot—a conduct which she lived bitterly to rue. On the news being brought to Henry at Meaux, he eagerly demanded where the boy was born, and on being told it was at Windsor, he appeared greatly struck and chagrined, and repeated to his chamberlain, Lord Fitzhugh, the following lines:—

"I, Henry, born at Monmouth,
Shall small time reign and much get;
But Henry of Windsor shall long reign, and lose all.
But as God wills, so be it."

It is probable that these were sentiments which the king expressed, and that they owe their sibylline form to some chronicler or astrologer of the time. It is certain that Speed, Stowe, Fabyan and Holinshed concur in saying that the king "prophesied the calamities of Henry VI." The boy was born on the 6th of December, 1421. On hearing of the fall of Meaux, Catherine left her infant to the care of its uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, and hastened to join Henry in France. She was escorted by the Duke of Bedford and 20,000 fresh troops, to enable Henry to complete the conquest of her brother and his unhappy country. She landed at Harfleur on the 21st of May, where she was received with great state and rejoicing by numbers of noblemen and gentlemen, who accompanied her on her route to Paris by Rouen to the Bois de Vincennes, where her father's court resided. Henry set out for Meaux to meet her there, and thence the two courts proceeded together to Paris to spend the festival of Whitsuntide.

But in the midst of these gay though unsatisfactory rejoicings there came a pressing message from the Duke of Burgundy to Henry, entreating him to hasten to his assistance against the Dauphin. Those sturdy Scots who had made such havoc amongst Henry's troops at Beaugé, were still in the country; and the Dauphin, collecting 20,000 men in the south, had put them under the command of the Earl of Buchan, the leader of those troops. They had crossed the Loire, taken La Charité, and proceeded to invest Cosne. At Cosne the Dauphin joined Buchan; and the Duke of Burgundy, to whom these towns belonged, seeing that his hereditary duchy of Burgundy would next be menaced, was most urgent in his appeal to Henry to fly to his assistance.

Henry, in the midst of his glory and his good fortune, had for some time felt the approaches of an illness that no exercise in the field or festivities in the city enabled him to shake off. In vain he resisted the insidious disease. It seized relentlessly on his constitution, and defied all the science of his physicians. At the call of Burgundy, however, he roused himself, and set out from Paris at the end of July. Cosne had agreed to surrender if not relieved by the 16th of August, and Henry was impatient to come up in time. But a greater victor than himself was now come out against him. Death had laid his hand upon him; and he had only reached Senlis, about twenty-eight miles from Paris, when he was seized with such debility that he was obliged to be carried thence to Corbeil in a horse-litter. There, spite of his determined attempt to go on, his malady assumed such feverish and alarming symptoms that he was compelled to give up, and surrender the command of the army to the Duke of Bedford. He had left the queen at Senlis, but she was now returned to the Bois de Vincennes, and thither he caused himself to be conveyed by water.

In the castle of Vincennes, which had witnessed many a strange passage in the history of France and her sovereigns, the great conqueror now lay helpless and hopeless of life, tended by Catherine and her mother. His very name had once more scared the Dauphin from the field. No sooner did he hear that Henry was on the way, than he hastily abandoned the siege of Cosne, recrossed the Loire, and threw himself again into Bourges. The Duke of Bedford, who found no enemy in the field, was preparing to cross the Loire in pursuit of him, when he was recalled to the dying bed of his royal brother.

If there ever was a combination of circumstances to make a death-bed hard, and cause the heart to cling tenaciously to life, they were those which surrounded Henry of Monmouth. But never, in the most trying hour of his existence, not even when he contemplated the vast hosts hemming him in on the eve of the great fight of Agincourt, did he display such unbroken firmness. For himself he expressed no anxiety and no regrets; his only solicitude was for his son and successor, still only nine months old. He called to his bedside his brother the Duke of Bedford, the Earl of Warwick, and others of his lords, and to them he gave the most solemn injunctions to be faithful guardians of their infant sovereign. He expressed no remorse for the blood which he had shed in his wars, unquestionably believing all that he had so often asserted, that he was the chosen instrument of Providence for the chastisement and renovation of France.

To the Duke of Bedford he said, "Comfort my dear wife—the most afflicted creature living." He most earnestly recommended the Duke and all his commanders to cultivate the friendship of the Duke of Burgundy; never to make peace with Charles, who "called himself Dauphin," except on condition of his total renunciation of the crown; never to release the Duke of Orleans or any of the French princes of the blood taken at Agincourt; nor in any way to yield the claims of his son on France. He appointed his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, protector in England during his son's minority, and his brother the Duke of Bedford regent in France, who should avail himself on all occasions of the counsel of the Duke of Burgundy. Being assured by his physicians that he had not more than two hours to live, he then sent for his spiritual counsellors; and while they were chanting the seven penitential psalms he stopped them at the verse, "Build thou the walls of Jerusalem," and assured them that when he had completed the settlement of France he had always intended to undertake a crusade. This was precisely what his father had done on his death-bed; and this appeared still a favourite idea of the European princes. Having thus systematically concluded all his affairs, temporal and spiritual, he calmly died on the last day of August, 1422, amid the sobs and deep grief of all around him. The contemporary writer, Titus Livius of Friuli, who had seen him, thus describes his person:—"In stature he was a little above the middle size; his countenance was beautiful, his neck long, his body slender, and his limbs most elegantly formed. He was very strong; and so swift, that, with two companions, without either dogs or missive weapons, he caught a doe, one of the fleetest animals. He was a lover of music, and excelled in all martial and manly exercises." He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

HENRY VI

Arrangements during the Minority—Condition of France—Death of Charles VI.—Bedford's Marriage—Battle of Crevant—Release of the Scottish King—Battle of Verneuil—Gloucester's Marriage and its Consequences—Rivalry of Gloucester and Beaufort—Siege of Orleans—Battle of the Herrings—Joan of Arc—The March to Orleans—Relief of the Town—March to Rheims—Coronation of Charles—The Repulse from Paris—Capture of the Maid—Her Trial and Death—Coronation of Henry—Bedford Marries again—Congress of Arras—Death of Bedford—The Tudors—Contests between Beaufort and Gloucester—Henry's Marriage—Deaths of Gloucester and Beaufort—Disasters in France—Fall and death of Suffolk.

Henry VI., on the death of his father, was scarcely nine months old. However prosperous his father had been, and however well fortified he seemed to have left him in the care of his mother and the ability and unity of his uncles, as well as the reverence of the people for their late brilliant king, no one who had studied history, even in the smallest degree, but must have foreseen in the course of so long a minority many troubles, and probably much disaster. It would, indeed, have been a miracle if the clashing ambitions of the blood-relations, and of other great men around the infant king's throne, had not produced much trouble and civil conflict. But the prospect of his power in France was still more critical. There he was the nominal heir to a throne of which his father had not lived to obtain possession—of a kingdom not yet entirely subdued by the British arms; a kingdom naturally hostile to an English ruler; a kingdom of proud, sensitive people, who, though they had consented to the ascendency of Henry V., in order to procure some degree of repose, yet had by no means forgotten the haughty and the cruel deeds of the English in their country; above all, a kingdom in which the rightful heir to the throne was still alive—in fact, had still most devoted adherents; and who presented to their feelings the image of a young prince unjustly and unnaturally excluded from his own great patrimony by an imbecile father and a haughty conqueror.

The effect of these circumstances became first manifest in England. After the interment of Henry V., Queen Catherine retired to Windsor with her infant charge, and the Parliament proceeded to take measures for the security of the throne during the minority. The nobles during the reign of Henry V. had been held in perfect and respectful subordination by the ability and the high *prestige* of the king. Parliament had asserted its own, but sought not to encroach on the royal prerogative in the hands of a sovereign who showed no disposition to encroach on the popular rights. But now Parliament, and especially the House of Peers, showed unmistakable evidence of a consciousness of their augmented authority.

Henry on his death-bed had named the Duke of Bedford as regent of France, the Duke of Gloucester as regent of England, and the Earl of Warwick as guardian of his son. On the arrival of the official information of the king's death, a number of peers and prelates, chiefly members of the royal council, assembled at Westminster, and issued commissions to the judges, sheriffs, and other officers, ordering them to continue in the discharge of their respective functions; and also summoning a Parliament to meet on the 5th of

November. On the day previous to the meeting of Parliament, a committee of peers offered to the Duke of Gloucester a commission empowering him, in the king's name and with the consent of the council, to open, conduct, and dissolve the Parliament. Gloucester objected to the words, "with the consent of the council." He contended that it was an infringement of his own right, the late king before his death having named him regent. But the peers insisted that what they did was made necessary by the extreme youth of the king, and Gloucester was obliged to give way.

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The Parliament immediately on assembling ratified all the acts by which it had been convoked, and entered upon the duty of arranging the form of government for the minority. Gloucester contended that his authority as regent did not depend on the consent of the council, but was the act of the late king himself; and that in no commissions of the late king had any such words as "acting by the consent of the council" been introduced. But Parliament declared the appointment of the late king to be of no force, inasmuch as to make it valid, it required the consent of the three estates. It was also shown that the last two centuries presented three minorities, those of Henry III., Edward III., and Richard II., and in none of them, except in the first two years of Henry III., had the powers of the executive government been committed to a guardian or a regent.

They refused altogether the title of regent, as far as England was concerned, but, leaving the Duke of Bedford regent of France, they did not even grant to Gloucester the same power under another name in this country. They gave the chief authority to the Duke of Bedford as the elder brother, and nominated him, not regent—which might sanction the idea of his authority being derived from the Crown only—but protector, or guardian, of the kingdom. They then appointed Gloucester protector during the Duke of Bedford's absence only, making him, as it were, merely deputy-protector—his brother's lieutenant.

They thus completely set aside the arrangement of the late king, and reduced the power of Gloucester to a subordinate degree. They limited it still more by appointing the chancellor treasurer and keeper of the privy seal, and sixteen members of council, with the Duke of Bedford as president. In the absence of the duke, Gloucester was to officiate as president. The care of the young king was committed to the Earl of Warwick, and his education to Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, afterwards the famous Cardinal. Beaufort was one of the three natural sons of John of Gaunt by Catherine Swynford, who were legitimatised by royal patent, and had taken the name of Beaufort from the castle of Beaufort in France, where they were born. The bishop was thus half-brother to Henry IV., and, consequently, great uncle to the infant king. Both as a churchman, and as belonging to a family which, though of royal blood, could have no pretensions to the crown, Parliament deemed him a fitting person to enjoy that important office.

These arrangements must have been very mortifying to the Duke of Gloucester; but being proposed by the Peers, and fully consented to by the Commons, he acquiesced in them with the best grace he could.

Having also enacted regulations for the proceedings of the council, and continued the tonnage and poundage and the duties on wool for two years, the Parliament was dissolved.

In France the Duke of Bedford appeared all-powerful. He had a reputation for ability, both in the council and the field, second only to that of his late brother the king. He had had varied experience under the consummate command of Henry V., and was everywhere regarded as a man of the highest prudence, probity, bravery, and liberality. The authority which the English Parliament had conferred on him, adding even to that designed by the late king, raised him still more in public opinion. He had now the whole power of England in his hands. His troops had long been inured to victory, and he was surrounded by a number of the most distinguished generals that the nation had ever produced. These were the Earls of Somerset, Warwick, Suffolk, Salisbury, and Arundel, the brave Talbot, and Sir John Fastolf. He was master of three-fourths of France, was in possession of its capital, and was in close alliance with its most powerful prince, the Duke of Burgundy. Following out the dying advice of the late king, he offered to Burgundy the regency of France, but that prince declined it, and, by the advice of his council, Charles VI. conferred it on Bedford.

While everything thus appeared to favour the English interest, the Dauphin's affairs were eminently discouraging. He possessed but a fragment of France in the south, and his officers were more celebrated for their ferocity than their military skill. He was only about twenty years of age, and had the character of an indolent and dissipated prince. His wife, Mary of Anjou, was a woman of much beauty and virtue, but she was neglected by him for his mistress, Agnes Sorel, to whom he was blindly devoted. The Duke of Burgundy, the most influential prince of the blood, was his mortal enemy, on account of the assassination of his father. The other great princes of his family, who should now have given strength to his party, the Dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, the Counts of Eu, Angoulême, and Vendôme, had been prisoners in England ever since the fatal day of Agincourt. The Duke of Brittany, one of the greatest vassals of his crown, had now deserted him and gone over to Burgundy and England. No other prince or noble had joined his standard, nor any foreign nation except the Scots.

But in the very depth of these depressing circumstances a sudden light sprang up. His father, Charles VI., died on the 21st of October, 1422, at his palace of St. Pol in Paris. This event was not likely to afflict the Dauphin greatly. In a political point of view the death of the king was of the very highest advantage to him. It cut at once a powerful bond of obedience to the English. Many of the French nobility, while ostensibly supporting the English, did it only out of deference to their own monarch. But that monarch once gone, they could not think of conferring their allegiance on a child and a foreigner when the true heir was at hand. In all French hearts, these sentiments began to stir; and the death of Charles VI., instead of seating Henry of Windsor on the throne of France, gave a shock to the English power there from which it never recovered.

The Duke of Bedford exerted himself to strengthen the English alliance to the utmost. To bind to him more securely the powerful Duke of Burgundy, he concluded the marriage with the Princess Anne, the youngest sister of the duke, which had been contracted at the treaty of Arras. On the 17th of April, 1423, he met at Amiens, Burgundy, the Duke of Brittany, and his brother Arthur, the Count o Richemont. Bedford knew that, next to Burgundy, the Duke of Brittany was the most desirable ally of the English. The provinces of France now in possession of England lay between the territories of these two princes, and must always be exposed to their attacks, when not in friendship with them. The Duke of Brittany had already acceded to the treaty of Troyes in resentment towards the Government of Charles VI., and had done homage to Henry V., as the acknowledged heir to the throne. But Bedford sought to bind him by fresh ties. His brother, the Count of Richemont, was a bold and ambitious man, and Bedford planned to gratify his ambition. The Count of Richemont had been one of the prisoners taken at Agincourt. While in England, Henry V. had shown him much kindness, and had permitted him to visit Brittany on his parole, where affairs of state made his presence highly desirable. He was in Brittany when Henry's death took place, and declared that as his parole was given only to Henry, it was now void, and, therefore, he declined to return to England. The plea was wholly untenable according to the laws of honour, but Bedford, so far from seeking to enforce the obligation, sought to lay him under one of a more pleasing kind. He proposed a marriage between Richemont and another of the sisters of the Duke of Burgundy, the widow of the dauphin Lewis, the elder brother of Charles. By this marriage Richemont would become not only allied to Burgundy, but to Bedford, and the Duke of Brittany would be more deeply interested in the career of these princes. At this meeting they swore to love each other as brothers, to support each other against the attacks of their enemies; but, above all, to protect the oppressed people of France, and to banish as soon as possible the scourge of war from its so long afflicted soil.

The new King of France, meanwhile, was not idle. He sought to strengthen himself in the only quarter from which he had hitherto received essential aid—namely, amongst the Scots. The Duke of Albany, the Regent of Scotland, was now dead, and his son and successor Murdoch, a man of an easy disposition, not finding any employment for the more restless and martial spirits amongst his subjects, those Scots eagerly offered their services to Charles VII., who gave them every encouragement, and heaped all the distinctions in his power upon them. The Earl of Buchan, the brother of the Scottish regent, was himself not only their leader, but the Constable of France. Continued arrivals of these Scottish adventurers swelled the ranks of Charles. Amongst others the Earl of Douglas brought over 5,000 men. These strengthened Charles in the south, but as he possessed some fortresses in the north, Bedford determined first to clear those of the enemy, in order that he might afterwards advance with more confidence southwards. The castles of Dorsoy and Noyelle, the town of Rue in Picardy, and Pont-sur-Seine, Vertus, and Montaigne, successively fell before the English arms. But a still more decisive action took place in June at Crévant in Burgundy. There James Stuart, Lord Darnley, at the head of a body of Scottish auxiliaries, and the Marshal of Severac with a number of French troops, sat down before the town. The Duke of Burgundy, feeling himself too weak in that quarter to cope with them, sent a pressing message to Bedford for aid. The duke at once despatched the Earls of Salisbury and Suffolk to raise the siege of Crévant. But the French, relying on their numbers, and still more on the well-known valour of their Scottish allies, stood their ground, and awaited the attack. On their march the English fell in with the Burgundians at Auxerre, under the Count of Toulongeon, hastening to the same goal. Still their united numbers were inferior to the enemy, and they had to force the passage of the Yonne in the face of the main body of the enemy. They found the French and Scots drawn up in strength on the right bank of the river. To draw them away from the place where they meant to cross, they appeared to direct the whole force of their attack upon the bridge. For three hours the battle raged there; but then, seeing that their stratagem had taken effect, the English at once plunged into the river, and were followed by the Burgundians. They forced their way over, gained the opposite bank, and the battle became fierce and general. The Scots fought valiantly; but the French, galled by a rear attack from the arrows of the garrison, soon gave way, and left their brave allies to bear the whole brunt of the battle. Attacked both in front and flank, the heroic Scots were mowed down mercilessly, The combined army cleared the field and entered the place in triumph, carrying with them as prisoners two of the commanders—the Count of Ventadour and Lord Darnley—each of whom had lost an eye in the battle. Of the Scots, 3,000 were said to be slain, and 2,000 taken with their general.

This was a most disastrous blow to Charles, and the ruin of his affairs seemed imminent; but just at this crisis came reinforcements from both Italy and Scotland, and retrieved his fortunes. The Earl of Douglas, who now arrived to help the new French monarch, had formerly fought for Henry V.; and it is probable this going over was the main cause of his being rewarded with the dukedom of Tourraine. Besides this, John de la Pole, brother to the Duke of Suffolk, was met, on his return from Anjou into Normandy, laden with plunder, at La Gravelle by a strong force under Harcourt, Count of Aumale, one of the chiefs of the royal party. The English were taken by surprise, encumbered by their booty, and especially by 10,000 head of cattle. Taken at this disadvantage, the archers, however, planted their sharp stakes, and for some time maintained the unequal contest; but they were eventually compelled to give way, and leave their cattle behind them, as well as 500 of their comrades slain, and their commander, De la Pole, prisoner.

De la Pole was soon afterwards exchanged; but these successes greatly encouraged all those who were inclined to go over to the French king. Several towns in the north and north-west of France had declared for their native prince. There was a spirit abroad there alarming to the English, and therefore, instead of being able to cross the Loire and bear down effectually on Charles, they were compelled to defend their hold on their own northern territories. To add to this disquietude, the Count of Richemont, whose friendship had been so anxiously sought by Bedford, soon proved that his character was of a kind not to be depended upon. Haughty and ambitious, he would not consent to serve unless he were placed at the head of an army. This Bedford had not sufficient confidence in his abilities or his integrity to concede. Nothing short of this would satisfy him. Bedford had secured him an alliance with himself and the Duke of Burgundy, by the marriage of Margaret, the sister of Burgundy; he had granted him ample lands, and he now offered him a liberal pension; but all would not soothe his offended dignity. He withdrew to his brother of Brittany, and used his influence to detach him from the English interest.

Chagrined at this, Bedford strove all the more to rivet the goodwill of Burgundy; but at the very time when Bedford entered into the alliance with Burgundy and Brittany at Amiens, which was to be so brotherly, and to last for ever, these two princes had made a separate and secret treaty, which boded no good to England at some future day. Seeing how precarious the friendship of these princes was, Bedford turned his attention to another source of strength. It was of the utmost consequence to deprive Charles of the assistance of Scotland, and to obtain, if possible, the co-operation of the brave Scots for England. He wrote, therefore, to the council at home, earnestly recommending that the Scottish king should be liberated, allowed to return to his kingdom with honour, and on such terms as should make him a fast friend to the country.

It will be recollected that James, the son of Robert III. of Scotland, was kidnapped at sea by Henry IV. of England, as his father was sending him to France for security, this being his only remaining son and successor—the elder son, the Duke of Rothesay, having been murdered by Ramorgny. James was well treated and well educated by Henry; but the Duke of Albany, the young prince's uncle, having usurped the government of Scotland under the name of regent, it was equally the interest of Henry and Albany to retain the young king in England. He had, accordingly, remained a royal captive at the English court now eighteen years. On the death of Henry IV., Henry V. had still retained James, who could not have been restored without incurring a war with Albany, for which his continual wars in France left him no leisure. On the Scots engaging in France against him, he endeavoured to prevail on James to issue an order forbidding his subjects to serve in the army of the Dauphin. James is said to have replied that so long as he was a captive, and his government in the hands of another, it neither became him to issue any such orders, nor the Scots to obey them. He therefore steadfastly refused; but added that it would be a pleasure and an advantage to himself to make the campaign in France under so renowned a captain as Henry. We have, therefore, seen James of Scotland commanding a detachment of Henry's army, on condition that within three months after its close he should be allowed to return to Scotland.

It would seem that the Government of the infant Henry VI. did not feel themselves bound by the engagement between James and Henry V., for he was still in captivity when Bedford suggested the policy of his release. The grandfather and father of James, Robert II., and Robert III., had been monarchs rather amiable than of great capacity; James was a very different man.

James I. was in person handsome, in constitution vigorous, in mind frank, affable, generous, and just. His accomplishments were of a high order. He had cultivated a knowledge of books and music in his many long years of solitary life in the Tower and at Windsor. At Windsor love had made a poet of him. He beheld from his window one of the queen's ladies in the court below, who wonderfully attracted his attention. This lady was Joan Beaufort, daughter of the Earl of Somerset, grand-daughter of John of Gaunt, and niece of Bishop Beaufort, afterwards the cardinal, the educator of the boy-king. Joan Beaufort was a fitting consort for the youthful King of Scotland. When he came, under Henry V., to have more liberty and freer intercourse with the court, her beauty and excellence entirely won his heart, and in honour of her he wrote the "King's Quhair," that is, the King's book, a poem which to this day continues to be admired by all lovers of our old, genuine poetry.

On the arrival of Catherine of Valois, the young bride of Henry V., at Windsor, she was naturally interested in this handsome and accomplished captive king. She heard of his attachment to the Lady Beaufort, and promoted his suit with the king and with her family. They were affianced; yet James was still detained in England. The time was now come when circumstances combined for his release. The old Duke of Albany had been long dead, and his son Murdoch, who had succeeded him, was not able to keep in order the rude barons of Scotland, or his still ruder sons. Two of them were so haughty and licentious that they were said to respect the authority of neither God nor man. Their behaviour to their father was destitute of all reverence, so much so, that one of them importuning the father for a favourite falcon, and he refusing it, the brutal son snatched it from the regent's wrist, and wrung its neck. The loss of his falcon did what numberless greater insults had not effected. "Since thou wilt give me neither reverence nor

ROTHESAY CASTLE.

(From a photograph by G. W. Wilson & Co., Aberdeen.)

obedience," said the enraged Murdoch, "I will fetch home one whom we all must obey."

Murdoch Stuart was as good as his word. He began to make overtures to the English Government for the return of James. As the young king was greatly attached to the English court, and likely to be more closely connected with it by marriage, the restoration to his throne was obviously much to the advantage of England under existing circumstances. At this juncture came the recommendation of Bedford, and the matter was accomplished. The Scots agreed to pay a considerable ransom by annual instalments. James was married to his admired Joan Beaufort, and, returning to his kingdom, was crowned with his queen at Scone, on the 21st of May, 1424.

While this great event was taking place, the Duke of Bedford was engaged in active warfare. The Count of Richemont and several Burgundian nobles had gone over to Charles; and, thus encouraged, his partisans had surprised Compiègne and Crotoy, and then the garrison of Ivry, which consisted of Bretons, opened the gates to the French. The duke procured fresh troops from England, re-took Compiègne and Crotoy, and sat down before Ivry with 2,000 men-at-arms and 7,000 archers Charles collected, by great exertion, an army of 14,000 men, half of whom were Scots. They were under the command of the Earl of Buchan, Constable of France, attended by the Earl of Douglas, the Duke of Alençon, the Marshal La Fayette, the Count of Aumale, and the Viscount of Narbonne. On reaching Ivry, he found it surrounded, and the English position too strong for attack; he therefore marched to Verneuil, which opened its gates to him.

Bedford did not allow them much time to enjoy their good fortune. Leaving a garrison in Ivry, he marched on to Verneuil. At his approach Buchan called a council of war, to determine what course of action they should adopt. The more prudent portion of the council advised a retreat, representing that all the past misfortunes of France had resulted from their rashness in giving battle when there was no necessity for it; and that this was the last army of the king, the only force remaining to enable him to defend the few provinces which were left him. But there was a great number of young French noblemen, who, precisely as at Agincourt, insisted upon fighting, and this counsel prevailed.

The French army possessed many advantages in the fight. They were greatly superior to Bedford in numbers, but they were an ill-assorted crowd of French, Italians, and Scots, the last the only staunch portion of the host. They had, however, the town defending one of their flanks, and for them, if necessary, to fall back upon. They took the precaution to leave their horses and baggage in the city, and to fight on foot, with the exception of about 2,000 men-at-arms, chiefly Italians, on horseback.

The English had, as usual, adopted the tactics of Creçy and Agincourt. The duke had ordered them to post the horses and baggage in the rear, to plant their pointed stakes in front, and wait.

The Earl of Douglas, aware of the mischief of attacking these archers thus posted, also advised the French to wait, and provoke the English to attack them. But here, again, the characteristic impatience of the French defeated his caution. The Count of Narbonne rushed on with his division, shouting, "Mountjoye! St. Denis!" and the rest were obliged to follow and support him. The whole body of the French army came down upon the English front, which stood firm under the shock, shouting, "St. George for Bedford!" The weight and impetuosity of the enemy broke in some degree the ranks of the archers, and forced them back towards their baggage, which they found attacked by La Hire and Saintrailles, with their cavalry. The archers let fly at these, and, after repeated charges, put the whole to flight, the Italians being the first to flinch under the fatal shower of arrows, and gallop off the field. The archers then turned again, accompanied by their rear division, and fell furiously on the van of the enemy. Here they came upon the Scots, who were fighting like lions, and for three hours they maintained a deadly struggle against the archers in front, and the Duke of Bedford thundering on their flank with his men-at-arms. The French supported their Scottish allies, but at length the whole were compelled to give way, and were pursued with great slaughter. The carnage was terrible. There were about 4,000 French, Scots, and Italians left on the field, and 1,600 of the English. The Earl of Buchan, the Earl of Douglas and his son Lord James Douglas, Sir Alexander Meldrum, and many other Scots of rank and distinction, were slain. Of the French, four counts, two viscounts, eight barons, and nearly 300 knights fell; amongst them, the Viscount Narbonne, chief author of the mischief, the Counts Tonnerre and Ventadour, with Sieurs Rochebaron and Gamaches. The Duke of Alençon, Marshal la Fayette, and 200 gentlemen were made prisoners. Bedford, as his brother

Henry had done at Agincourt, called his officers around him, and returned thanks to God on the field. In everything the duke had kept in view the military maxims of his illustrious brother, and the battle of Verneuil was long compared to that of Agincourt. It was fought on the 16th of August, 1424. But it was the last great victory of this able commander, whose prudence and skill were destined henceforth to be crippled and eventually crushed by the reckless ambition and fatal quarrels of his relatives, above all by the conduct of his brother Gloucester.

This overthrow appeared to annihilate the power of Charles VII. His last army was dispersed and demoralised. The Scots were so decimated that they never again could form a distinct corps in the French army, for they could no longer draw fresh troops from their own country, where now James I. reigned in strict alliance with England. Charles was so straitened that he had not even money for his personal needs, much less for subsisting his troops. It was all that he could do to get his table supplied with the plainest fare for himself and his few followers. Day after day brought him the news of some fresh loss or disaster. Towns most important to him were compelled to surrender for want of supplies. All the country north of the Loire was lost to him, and his enemies were preparing to drive him out of the last remains of his hereditary kingdom.

But it was the singular fortune of this prince, when reduced by his demerits to the lowest condition, always to find himself raised again by circumstances which no merit or talent of the ablest or most prudent man could originate. He was—spite of his weaknesses, his follies, and his repeated overthrows — saved by something little short of a miracle, and reserved to triumph over all his enemies, and to secure to the French crown provinces which it had lost for ages.

This time the dissensions of the English council turned the scale in his favour. Instead of the Duke of Gloucester exerting himself to maintain concord at home, and sending over fresh forces and supplies to his brother the regent in France, he had plunged himself into violent altercations with Henry Beaufort, which produced anger, quarrels, and partisanship in the Government, and threatened the worst consequences. But still more startling and pregnant with calamity was the rash marriage of Gloucester with Jacqueline of Bavaria. Nothing so mischievous to the ascendency of England in France could have been devised by the subtlest enemy; and Gloucester appears to have been of so headstrong and impetuous a temper, that he set at naught all considerations of policy and sound advice.

Jacqueline of Bavaria was the heiress of Hainault, Holland, Zealand, and Friesland. This heiress of whole kingdoms was, moreover, handsome, high-spirited, and of a bold and masculine understanding. The court of France had early cast its eyes upon her desirable domains, and secured her for the dauphin John. After the death of the Dauphin, her uncle, called John the Merciless, who had formerly waged fierce war to deprive her of her heritage, now sought to marry her to the Duke of Brabant, whose stepfather he was. Henry V. had sought her hand for his brother Bedford; but the immense advantage which the possession of Hainault and Holland would give to the English, already on the eve, as it appeared, of becoming masters of France, no doubt excited the strongest, if not the most open opposition on the part of her near relative, the Duke of Burgundy, and others who dreaded such a contingency. Jacqueline was worried into the marriage with the Duke of Brabant. It was an ill-starred union. The duke was a mere boy of sixteen, and a sickly and wilful boy. Jacqueline was of womanly age, and had, too, a will of her own. She began with despising her husband, and ended by hating him. Their life was diversified chiefly by quarrels. The favourite of her husband, William le Bégue, had insulted Jacqueline, and, at her instigation, her half-brother, called the Bastard of Hainault, proceeded to punish him, and, in truth, killed him. Her husband, in his revenge, drove away the ladies and the servants who had accompanied her from Holland; and soon after the people rose and massacred the favourites of the duke. Jacqueline got away to her mother at Valenciennes, and from Valenciennes she made her way over to England, where she was received with a warm welcome, and had a pension of £100 per month conferred on her by the king.

While in England she is said to have fallen in love with the Duke of Gloucester, and the Duke returned the sentiment with the promptitude which his own ardent character and the extent of the lady's lands made very natural. Henry V., however, saw instantly how destructive would be any such alliance to all his hopes in France. The Duke of Brabant was the near relative of the Duke of Burgundy, and Burgundy was his heir. It was inevitable that the duke would view with profound alarm a marriage which would not only deprive him of the reversion of Holland and Hainault, but place the English on almost every side of his paternal lands, with an extension of power and influence perfectly overwhelming. Henry, therefore, did everything in his power to discourage this connection, and it no doubt lay very much at the bottom of his earnest injunctions on his death-bed to his brothers to cultivate with all their energy the friendship of Burgundy.

But sentiments of policy or prudence were lost on Gloucester. His ambition, if not his love, fired at the idea of possessing such a splendid territory in right of his wife, made him disregard every other consideration. He resolved to marry Jacqueline, contending that the Duke of Brabant was within the prescribed degrees of consanguinity, though a dispensation had been obtained for that very purpose. A second dispensation was requisite before Gloucester could marry the duchess, and this the Pope, Martin V., refused, in consequence of the representations of the Duke of Burgundy. Gloucester then applied to Benedict XIII., who, though he had been deposed from the papal chair by the Council of Constance, refused to submit to its dictum. He was only too happy to oblige where Martin had disobliged, and Gloucester married the heiress of Holland.

GREAT SEAL OF HENRY VI.

So long as Gloucester and his bride remained quiescent in England, the Duke of Burgundy, probably under the persuasions of Bedford, remained passive also. But presently Gloucester and Jacqueline landed at Calais with an English army of 5,000 or 6,000 men. This was a few weeks after the battle of Verneuil, and Burgundy was greatly pleased, believing that Gloucester was come with reinforcements for the combined army destined to complete the subjugation of France. But his astonishment and indignation knew no bounds, when he learned that Gloucester and his lady had marched directly into Hainault, and taken possession of it in virtue of the marriage. He was at the moment celebrating his own nuptials with the Dowager Duchess of Nevers. He instantly recalled his troops from the combined army, and sent them to assist the Duke of Brabant to drive Gloucester from Hainault. He wrote the most passionate letters to all his vassals, commanding them to hasten to the assistance of Brabant. On his part Gloucester wrote to the Duke of Burgundy, deprecating his hostility, declaring that he had broken no treaty or peace with Burgundy, and was merely taking possession of his own. He even added that Burgundy had formerly favoured this very alliance. Burgundy replied that this was false, and the two angry dukes proceeded to still higher words, and the engagement to fight a duel, which, however, never came off.

In the meantime, the effect of this quarrel was disastrous to Bedford's campaign. Not only had the Duke of Burgundy withdrawn his troops to oppose Gloucester, but Gloucester, on his part, also intercepted the troops and supplies intended for Bedford, and diverted them to his own contest in Hainault. In a great council at Paris it was at length decided that the legitimacy of the two marriages should be submitted to the Pope, and that the contest should pause till his decision was received. The Duke of Brabant consented, but Gloucester refused. The Duke of Burgundy thereupon prosecuted the war against Gloucester with redoubled determination; and to add to Bedford's embarrassment, the Count of Richemont, flattered by Charles with the appointment of Constable of France, vacant by the death of the Earl of Buchan at Verneuil, prevailed on his brother, the Duke of Brittany, also to go over to Charles. Nay, the Burgundians, brought into contact with the enemies of England, began to listen to their representations of the English ambition, and suggestions were even made to the duke from various quarters for a reconciliation with the rightful King of France. Luckily, the murder of his father was still strong in his remembrance, and he remained for eight years longer the ally of his brother-in-law, Bedford, but not the same cordial and efficient one.

Gloucester maintained the contest against his combined foes for about a year and a half, when the exhaustion of his resources, and his jealousy of the growing influence of his uncle Beaufort in the government at home, drew him to England. His departure was fatal to all his views on Hainault. No sooner was he gone than Valenciennes, Condé, and Bouchain opened their gates to Burgundy Jacqueline, at Gloucester's departure, had entreated him not to leave her behind. But the people of Mons insisted on her remaining there to head the resistance to Brabant and Burgundy. It was only in tears that she consented to remain, predicting the fatal consequences of their separation. Her fears were speedily confirmed. Mons was invested by Burgundy, and the perfidious citizens delivered up Jacqueline to him. She was conducted by the Prince of Orange to Ghent, where she was to be detained till the Pope had decided on the validity of the marriage.

ESCAPE OF JACQUELINE FROM GHENT. (*See p.* 585.)

The adventurous Jacqueline did not feel herself bound to wait for the decree of the Pontiff. She planned, with a woman's ingenuity, escape from her prison. She seized her opportunity, dressed herself and maid in male attire, stole unobserved, in the dusk of the evening, out of her place of detention, mounted on horseback, and, passing the city gates, continued her flight till she reached the borders of

Holland, where her subjects received her with enthusiasm. But the Duke of Burgundy was not inclined thus to let her escape. He pursued her to Holland; her subjects refused to betray her, and a war was prosecuted in that country for two years. Gloucester sent her a reinforcement of 500 men, and would have sent her more, but was prevented by Bedford and the council.

In 1426, the Pope pronounced the validity of the marriage with the Duke of Brabant; but that feeble personage died soon after, and Jacqueline, who now certainly, according to all the laws of God and man, was free, became the wife of Gloucester. But right was of little importance in that age, and especially in the case of a woman. The Duke of Burgundy was determined to reduce her by force of arms, and compel her to acknowledge him as her heir. Had England not been engaged in the conquest of France, the Duke of Gloucester would have been victoriously supported in his claim; as it was, these claims were destructive of the greater object of ambition. Little, however, as the Duke of Gloucester was able to contribute to the support of his wife, who now assumed the title of the Duchess of Gloucester, it enabled her to maintain the contest till 1428, when the power of Burgundy bore her down; and he compelled her to sign a treaty nominating him her heir, admitting him to garrison her towns and fortresses in security of that claim, and pledging her word never to marry without his consent.

The war in Hainault and Holland, created by the marriage of Gloucester and Jacqueline of Hainault, whose life more resembles a romance than a piece of real history, perfectly crippled the proceedings of Bedford. He lost the grand opportunity of following up the impression of the battle of Verneuil, and thus putting an end to the war. For three years the war was almost at a standstill. Neither the regent nor Charles was in a condition to make further demonstrations than slight skirmishes and sieges, which, without advancing one party or the other, tended to sink the people still more deeply in misery.

The court of London was torn by the dissensions of Gloucester and Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester. This prelate was not more ambitious than he was politic. He carefully hoarded the large revenues of his see and of his private estate, and gave an air of patriotism to his wealth, by lending it to the Crown in its need. He had furnished to the late king £28,000, and to the present £11,000. He had thrice held the high office of chancellor; he had been the ecclesiastical representative at the Council of Constance, and had acquired a good character for sanctity by having made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Every act of his ambition wore an air of patriotism. He had, in his character of guardian of the young king and of chancellor, opposed with all his energy the attempt of Gloucester on Hainault. When the duke persisted in proceeding on that expedition, he took advantage of his absence to garrison the Tower, and committed it to the keeping of Richard Woodville, with the significant injunction "to admit no one more powerful than himself." On the return of Gloucester he was accordingly refused a lodging in the Tower; and rightly attributing the insult to the secret orders of his uncle Beaufort, he instantly took counter-measures by ordering the lord mayor to close the city gates, and to furnish him with 500 horsemen, as a guard, with which he might in safety pay his respects to his nephew, the king, at Eltham. The followers of Beaufort, on the other hand, posted themselves at the foot of London Bridge, of which they sought to take forcible possession. They barricaded the street, placed archers at all the windows on both sides, and declared that, as the duke had excluded the chancellor from going into the city, they would prevent the duke from going out. The country was on the very edge of civil war. In vain the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Duke of Coimbra, the second son of the King of Portugal, by Philippa, sister of the late monarch, rode to and fro between the hostile relatives, endeavouring to effect a pacification. The bishop wrote off post haste to Bedford, entreating him to come instantly to prevent the effusion of blood.

Bedford left his now greatly weakened post in France with a groan over the folly and the obstinacy of his brother; and landing in England a little before Christmas, summoned a Parliament to meet at Leicester in February. In the meantime he strove hard to reconcile the antagonists. He sent the Archbishop of Canterbury and a deputation of the lords to request Gloucester to meet the council at Northampton towards the end of January, representing that there could be no reasonable objection on his part to meet his uncle, who, as the accused party, had just right to be heard; and assuring him that efficient measures should be taken to prevent any collision between their followers.

Gloucester, in his fierce resentment, was not to be persuaded; he was, therefore, summoned to attend in his place in Parliament. There Gloucester presented a bill of impeachment against Beaufort, in which, after stating his own grievances, he preferred two serious charges, which he swore had been communicated to him by the late king, his brother. These were nothing less than that Beaufort had exhorted Henry V. to usurp the crown during the life of his father; and, secondly, that he, Beaufort, had hired assassins to murder Henry while he was Prince of Wales.

Beaufort replied to these charges that, so far as they related to the late king, they were false, and he instanced, in proof of his innocence, the confidence Henry V. had reposed in him on coming to the throne, and his constant employment of him. He denied having given just cause of offence to Gloucester, and complained of Gloucester's behaviour towards him. The Duke of Bedford and the other lords took an oath to judge impartially between the opponents, and then they on their part agreed to leave the decision to the Archbishop of Canterbury and eight other arbitrators. After Beaufort had solemnly declared that he had no ill-will to Gloucester, and besought his reconciliation, Gloucester appeared to consent. They shook hands, the bishop resigned his seals of office, and requested permission to travel.

It was thought, however, that Gloucester was by no means in a mood for submitting even to the council. He was reported to say, "Let my brother govern as him listeth while he is in this land; after his going over into France I woll governe as me seemeth." Out of doors the followers of the two antagonists being forbidden to bring arms to the neighbourhood of the Parliament, they came with bludgeons upon their shoulders, whence it was called the Parliament of Bats. These being also prohibited, they put stones and lumps of lead in their pockets, so ready were they for an affray.

The council, apprehensive of mischief, and especially from Gloucester after the departure of Bedford, required both dukes to swear that, during the minority of the king, and for the peace and security of his throne, they would "be advised, demeaned, and ruled by the lords of the council; and obey unto the king and to them as lowly as the least and poorest of his subjects."

Bedford, after a sojourn of eight months, returned to France. The Duke of Brittany was severely punished for his defection. The English poured their troops into his province, and overran it with fire and sword to the very walls of Rennes. The duke solicited an armistice; it was denied him; again the war went on, and again he was everywhere discomfited. At length he was compelled to accept the terms dictated by Bedford, and swore once more, with all his barons, prelates, and commonalty, to observe the treaty of Troyes, and do homage to Henry for his territories, and to no other prince whatever.

Flushed with this success, the leaders of the army in the following year, 1428, were urgent to make a grand descent on the country south of the Loire, and to drive Charles from the provinces yet adhering to him. Bedford, aware of the suspicious character of some of his allies, was strongly opposed to the measure. Several councils were held in Paris to discuss the propriety of this undertaking, and Bedford in vain opposed it; he was overwhelmed by a majority of voices. Of this circumstance he afterwards complained in one of his letters to the king. "Alle things prospered for you," he wrote, "till the time of the seage of Orleans, taken in hand God knoweth by what advice." It was now Orleans that the commanders were eager to attack. Montague, Earl of Salisbury, had just brought over from England a reinforcement of 6,000 men. He was regarded as inferior in the field only to the Earl of Warwick, and was unanimously elected general on the occasion.

Orleans was one of the most important places in the kingdom, and the French did everything which could enable it to hold out a siege. Stores and ammunition were collected into the city; batteries were erected on all sides upon the walls; and the beautiful suburbs were razed to the ground. The inhabitants of the neighbouring country, and of the towns of Bourges, Poitiers, La Rochelle, and other places, sent money, troops, and stores. The Parliament at Chinon voted 400,000 francs in aid of the city. Charles VII. himself appeared to be roused from his torpor by the imminent danger of this quiet town, and sent thither all the troops that he could spare, under some of his most famous commanders, Saintrailles, De Guitry, and Villars. He appointed the Count de Gaucourt governor, and many brave Scots—encouraged by a treaty which Charles had made with their sovereign, James I., binding himself to marry the Dauphin to a daughter of his, and give him the county of Evreux or the Duchy of Berri—threw themselves into it.

Salisbury, reducing Mun, Jeuville, and other places on the way, advanced towards Orleans, and sat down before it on the 12th of October. He pitched his tent amid the ruins of a monastery on the left bank of the river, and directed his first attack against the Tournelles, a tower built at the extremity of the bridge leading into the city. This he took by assault; but the garrison retreating, broke down an arch of the bridge behind them and there was another defence erected at the city end of the bridge. From the windows of the evacuated Tournelles, Salisbury directed the attack on the city. His post was discovered, and a huge stone ball was discharged from a cannon at the window. He observed the flash, and started aside; but the window was dashed in, the officer who had been standing behind him was killed, and the iron-work of the window driven in different directions with such force, that Salisbury was so wounded in the face by it that he died in a week.

The command devolved on the Earl of Suffolk, who endeavoured to convert the siege into a blockade. He erected huts at intervals all round the city, covered from the enemy's fire by banks of earth, throwing up lines of entrenchments from one of these posts, or bastilles, as they were called, to the other. But the circuit which they had thus to occupy was so vast that the intervals between the bastilles were too great for his amount of forces to secure. The Bastard of Orleans, a natural son of the Duke of Orleans who was killed by Burgundy, made his way into the city with numerous bodies of French, Scots, Spaniards, and Italians. De Culant, whom Charles had named Admiral of France, did the like by means of the river, and thus Orleans continued during the winter to set the besiegers at defiance.

Early in February, the Duke of Bedford sent aid from Paris—Sir John Fastolf, with 1,500 men, and 400 waggons and carts laden with stores and provisions for the army before Orleans. Sir John had reached Bouvray when he received the alarming intelligence that the Count Charles of Bourbon, the Count of Clermont, and Sir John Stewart, Constable of Scotland, had thrown themselves with 4,000 or 5,000 cavalry betwixt him and Orleans. They were, moreover, in full march upon him. This intelligence reached him at midnight, and he lost no time in preparing for the attack. He drew up all his waggons and carts in a circle, enclosing his troops, leaving an opening at each end, where he posted his archers in great force. Every moment he expected the attack, but the enemy was disputing as to the best mode of making the assault. The French were for charging on horseback, the Scots were for dismounting and fighting on foot. It was not till three o'clock in the morning that the disputants resolved each to fight in their own way. The attack was made simultaneously at both openings, but the archers sent such well-directed volleys of arrows amongst the assailants, that the French speedily galloped off the field, leaving nearly all the Scots dead upon it. Six hundred of the united, or rather disunited, force were slain; and Sir John marched in triumph into the camp before Orleans with the stores which the French had confidently counted upon possessing. The Constable of Scotland, the Sieurs D'Albret and Rochechouart were amongst the slain, and the Count of Dunois was severely wounded. This battle, from the salted fish and provisions which Sir John was conveying for the use of the army during Lent, was called the Battle of the Herrings.

This was a severe blow to Charles VII. There appeared only one way of preventing the almost immediate loss of his crown. The English commander was actively pressing the siege. He had cast up a still more complete line round the city, fresh reinforcements enabled him to make the bastilles more numerous, and famine began to menace the place with all its horrors. To avoid the fall of Orleans, Charles engaged the Duke of Orleans, who had been so long a prisoner in England, to exert himself with the Protector and council in England to guarantee the neutrality of his demesnes, and for greater security to consign them during the war to their ally, the Duke of Burgundy. To this the council consented, as placing the duchy in a manner in the hands of England. The Duke of Burgundy readily accepted this trust, and waited on Bedford in Paris to apprise him of it. But Bedford, by no means flattered by the expected prey being thus adroitly taken out of his hands, said that he was not of a humour to beat the bushes while others ran away with the game. Burgundy affected to smile at the apt simile, and retired; but it was with a resolve in his breast, to be made apparent in due time.

Foiled in this attempt, Charles now gave way to despair. The city of Orleans could not possibly long hold out, and he determined to retire with the miserable remainder of his forces into Languedoc and Dauphiné, and there await the last attacks of the conquering foe. This cowardly resolve was, however, vehemently resisted by the queen, who declared that it would be the total ruin of his affairs; and his mistress, Agnes Sorel, who was living on the best of terms with the queen, supported her in this protest vigorously, threatening, if he made so pusillanimous a retreat, to go over to England and seek a better fortune in the British court. This decided the king, and while affairs were in this critical situation,

JOAN OF ARC BEFORE CHARLES. *(See p. 591.)*

help, and eventually triumph, came from a quarter which no human sagacity could have foreseen.

On the borders of Lorraine, but just within the province of Champagne, lies the hamlet of Domrémy, situate between Neufchâteau and Vaucouleurs. In this hamlet lived a small farmer of the name of James d'Arc; and his daughter Joan, whilst a little girl, was accustomed to tend his small flock of sheep in the fields and heaths around. When about five years of age, whilst walking in her father's garden on a Sunday, she declared she saw a bright light in the air near her, and turning towards it saw a figure, who said that he was the archangel Michael, and commanded her to be good and dutiful, and that God would protect her.

At this period the fortunes of unhappy France were at their lowest ebb. The inhabitants of Domrémy were royalists, but those of Marcy, the next village, were Burgundians. Thence arose constant feuds. When they met they fought and pelted each other with stones. Joan saw all this, and heard the insults of the Burgundians when the king was defeated and disgraced. At this moment came the terrible news of the great battle of Verneuil, and she saw the distress and despair of her friends and neighbours. The visions now came oftener, and comforted her, till the siege, the famine, and the expected fall of Orleans renewed the general trouble. With the archangel Michael she now regularly saw the saints Catherine and Margaret, who were the patronesses of her parish church. They exhorted her to devote herself to the salvation of her country. She represented that she was a poor peasant maiden, and did not know anything of such great matters; but the archangel Michael assured her that strength and wisdom would be given her, and that the saints Catherine and Margaret would go with her, and that all would be well. The two female saints then appeared to her, surrounded by a great light, their heads crowned with jewels, and their voices gentle and sweet as music. Joan knew that there was a prophecy abroad that, as France had been ruined by a wicked woman—Isabella of Bavaria—so it should be restored by a virgin, spotless, and devoted to the rescue of her country. Nay, this saviour of France was to come out of the neighbouring forest of oaks.

The heavenly voices became more and more frequent, more and more urgent, as the affairs of France approached a crisis, announcing that she was the maid who was appointed to save France. Joan became greatly distressed, and was often found weeping when the visions left her, and longing that the angels of paradise would carry her away with them. Her parents had no faith in her visions, and, to prevent her from going off to the army, they tried to force her into a marriage; but Joan had voluntarily taken a vow of perpetual chastity, and she revolted with horror from the proposal. Just then a party of Burgundians fell on the village of Domrémy, plundered it, and burnt down the church. Joan, with her parents, was compelled to flee and seek refuge in Neufchâteau. When they returned to Domrémy, and beheld the scene of desolation, the indignation of Joan was roused to the highest pitch. The voices now commanded her, on pain of the forfeiture of her salvation, to go at once to Baudricourt, the Governor of Vaucouleurs, and demand an escort to the court of the king. There she was to announce to him that she was sent to raise the siege of Orleans, and to crown him, the rightful King of France, in the city of Rheims. Joan now gave way; there was nothing to be hoped from her parents but opposition; she therefore hastened secretly to Vaucouleurs, to an uncle—a simple, pious man—there. The old man, a wheelwright by trade, at once went with her to the governor. Baudricourt at first refused to see her; when she was, at length, through her importunity, admitted, he looked upon her as crazed, and told her uncle that he should send her back to her parents, and that she ought to be well whipped. Joan said, "It was her Lord's work, and she must do it." "Who is your lord?" asked Baudricourt. "The King of Heaven!" replied Joan. This satisfied the governor of her insanity, and he rudely dismissed her. But Joan still remained at Vaucouleurs, daily praying before the high altar in the church, and asserting that the voices urged her day and night to proceed and execute her mission. The rumour of this strange maiden flew rapidly through the town and country; the sight of her modesty and piety, and the fame of her past pure and devout life, brought numbers of people to see her, and amongst others men of high note.

Baudricourt was compelled by the public voice to take charge of her; but not before he had tested her by a priest and the sprinkling of holy water, that she was no sorceress, nor possessed of the devil. The Seigneurs de Metz and Bertrand de Poulengi, who had conceived full faith in her, offered to accompany her, with her brother Peter, two servants, a king's messenger, and Richard, an archer of the royal guard. The journey thus undertaken in the middle of February, 1429, was, according to ordinary ideas, little short of an act of madness. The distance from Vaucouleurs to Chinon in Tourraine, where Charles's court lay, was 150 leagues, through a country abounding with hostile garrisons, and, where these were absent, with savage marauders. But Joan declared that they should go in perfect safety, and they did so. Joan rode boldly, in man's attire, and with a sword by her side, but they saw not even a single enemy. In ten days they arrived at Fierbois, a few miles from Chinon, and she sent to inform the king of her desire to wait upon him.

When the advent of so singular a champion was announced to the frivolous Charles, he burst into a loud fit of laughter. Some of his counsellors, however, advised him to see her, others treated the proposition as the height of absurdity. For three days the court continued divided, and Charles unable to decide. At length it was agreed that she should be admitted; and to test her pretensions to superhuman direction, Charles was to pass for a private person, and one of the princes was to represent him. But Joan discovered the king at a glance; and walking up to him with serious and unembarrassed air, through the crowd of staring courtiers, bent her knee, and said, "God give you good life, gentle king!" Charles was surprised, but replied, pointing to another part of the hall, "I am not the king: he is there." "In the name of God," rejoined Joan, "it is not they, but you who are the king. I am, most noble king, Joan the maid, sent of God to aid you and the kingdom, and by His name I announce to you that you will be crowned in the city of Rheims."

But the timid Charles hesitated, and conveyed her to Poitiers to be examined before the Parliament by the most learned doctors and subtle theologians. For three weeks she was interrogated and cross-questioned in all ways. Every kind of erudite trap was laid for her, but in vain. She had but one story—that she was sent to raise the siege of Orleans, and to crown the king at Rheims, now in the hands of his enemies. When asked for a miracle, she replied, "Send me to Orleans, with an escort of men-at-arms, and you shall soon see the sign of the truth of my mission—the raising of the siege." When not before the council, she passed her time in retirement and prayer. Having passed the most searching ordeal of the prelates and doctors, and the repeated application of holy water, she was once more brought out, armed cap-à-pie, with her banner borne before her, and equipped at all points like a knight. Mounted on a white charger, she ran a tilt with a lance, keeping such a firm seat, and displaying so steady an eye, that the soldiers and watching multitudes were enraptured.

The people of Orleans sent express for instant aid, and implored that the maid should lead the reinforcement. She demanded an ancient sword which, she said, lay in a tomb in the church of St. Catherine, at Fierbois, which was sought for, found, and brought to her, having five crosses upon its blade. Thus armed, receiving the staff and rank of general, a brave knight, of the name of John Daulon, being appointed her esquire, with two pages and two heralds, the maid of Domrémy set out with a body of troops conveying provisions to Orleans. No sooner did she come into their camp, than she instituted the most rigorous discipline. She expelled all the low women who followed it, and insisted on every soldier confessing his sins and taking the sacrament.

The famishing people of Orleans received Joan of Arc with enthusiastic acclamations and blazing torches. They believed that deliverance was come to them from Heaven, and they were right. A splendid banquet was offered to Joan, but she declined it, retiring to the house of Bouchier, the treasurer to the Duke of Orleans, where she supped simply on bread dipped in wine; and there she remained during her stay in Orleans, keeping the wife and daughter of Bouchier constantly about her, to prevent any aspersions on her fair fame.

The strangest terror fell over the English soldiers. They had heard of nothing for two months but the coming of this maid, who had written to their commanders, telling them she was ordained by God to drive them out of France. The French had proclaimed her as sent by Heaven; the English officers, with curses, had sworn that she came from the devil. This, which they thought would completely destroy her with the soldiers, was the very thing which fixed her power over them. They would probably have cared nothing for her professed divine mission; but they at once gave credit to her alliance with Satan, and declared that flesh and blood they did not fear, but they were no match for the arch-fiend. In vain the commanders, who saw their error, endeavoured to remove this impression by representing Joan as a low-born, ignorant wench, and no better than she should be, who was got up by the French to frighten them: the mischief was done; in their eyes Joan was a witch of the first order, and wherever she appeared the soldiers fled. The subjects of Burgundy, who was himself no longer cordial in the cause, stole away from the camp on all sides; and the numbers necessary for the blockade of the town became deficient. The French now went in and out with impunity. A large store of provisions had arrived at Blois, which Charles constituted a depôt for the supply of Orleans. Joan marched out at the head of a very strong body, attended by the Bastard of Orleans, Saintrailles, La Hire, and other generals. Her banner of white silk, bordered with fleur-de-lis of silver, and on one side bearing an image of the Almighty, on the other the words "Jhesus Maria," was borne before her. After came a body of priests bearing another banner, and chanting their anthems; and in this manner, glittering in her bright armour, and mounted on her milk-white steed, the maid rode forth in the very face of the English, who lay still, as if stricken into stone. Thus she went to Blois, and returned with fresh troops and means of defence.

Joan now mounted a tower opposite to the Tournelles, and called to the English, bidding them begone from France, or worse would befall them. Sir William Glansdale replied from the Tournelles, abusing her for a witch and an abandoned woman, bidding her go back to her cows. "Base knight!" said Joan, "thou thyself shalt never pass hence, but shalt surely be slain." She now commanded an assault on the bastilles; but the generals, who were becoming jealous of Joan's fame, resolved to try their fortune without her. They told her they would commence the attack the next day, and Joan retired to lie down and take some repose. Soon she started up, and called for her arms, saying the voices summoned her to fight, and rushing forth she met the soldiers returning from a sortie, which had been made without her knowledge, and in which the French were repulsed with slaughter.

Joan was greatly enraged, and now led on the forces herself. Successively the bastilles of St. Loup, St. Jean le Blanc, and the Augustinians fell before her. The attack was then led against the main fortress, the Tournelles. Joan led the way, severely reprimanding Gaucourt, the governor of the city, for his disobedience to her orders, and threatening to put him or any one to death who opposed her. The people and soldiers, who worshipped her, stood to a man in her support, and she led the way to the Tournelles, sword in hand. Three times the French attacked the tower with all their force and engines, but the English this time defended themselves manfully, and with their artillery and arrows mowed down the French, clearing the bridge and river bank of them. Nothing daunted, Joan seized a scaling-ladder, and, amid a hail of shot and flying shafts, advanced to the foot of the tower, planted her ladder, and began to ascend. An arrow struck her, piercing her armour between the chest and shoulder, and she fell into the ditch. The English gave a great shout at the sight, and Joan, supposed to be dead, was borne away into the rear. Finding that the maid was alive, the arrow was extracted, and, feeling all the weakness of the woman during the operation, Joan cried in agony; but once over, she fell on her knees in prayer, and rose up as if wholly refreshed, declaring it was not blood but glory that flowed from her wound, and that the voices called her to finish her victory. The combat recommenced with augmented fury; the English, confounded at the reappearance of the maid, gave way, and Glansdale and his knights were put to the sword, as Joan had predicted.

That night Suffolk held a council of war, and such appeared the discouragement of his troops, that it was resolved to abandon the siege and man all the fortresses along the river. Accordingly, the next day he drew out his forces, and placed them in battle array. Determined to make a show of resistance, while in the very act of drawing off, he sent a challenge into the city, bidding the French, now so superior in numbers as they were, to come with their Joan, and, were she harlot, witch, or prophetess, they would fight her in a fair field. It was Sunday; Joan forbade the French to quit the city, but to spend the day in worshipping God, who had given them the victory. Suffolk waited for some hours in vain, when he gave the concerted signal, and all the long line of forts burst into flames, and the soldiers, dejected and crestfallen, marched away. Joan prohibited any pursuit that day.

Thus the first of the two great things which Joan had promised was accomplished—the siege of Orleans was raised; and the maid, now honoured with the title of the Maid of Orleans, rode forth to meet the king at Blois. As she advanced through the country, the peasantry flocked on all sides to behold her, and crowded forward to touch her feet, her very garments, and, if unable to do that, were happy to touch her horse. By the court she was received with great honour, and the king proposed to entertain her with a magnificent banquet. But Joan told him that it was no time for feasting and dancing; she had much yet to do for France, and but little time to do it in, for her voices told her that she should die within two years. She called on Charles now to advance with her to Rheims, where she must crown him, and leave the English and Burgundians, who were safe in the hand of God.

THE CATHEDRAL, RHEIMS.

Charles put himself at the head of his forces, and collected all his power on the banks of the Loire. He proposed, however, first to clear the enemy from their strongholds, and afterwards to march to Rheims. His army, led on by the Maid, invested the town of Jargeau, where Suffolk, the commander-in-chief, lay, and within ten days the place was carried by storm, and Suffolk himself taken prisoner. In this triumphant action Joan, as usual, led the way. She was the first to scale the wall of the city; but on her head appearing above it she received a blow which precipitated her into the ditch. She was severely bruised, but not killed; and as she lay on the ground, unable to raise herself, she cried, "Forward, countrymen! fear nothing; the Lord has delivered them into our hands." The soldiers, fired to enthusiasm by her heroism and her confident words, rushed on and took the place. Three hundred of the garrison lay dead. Six thousand of the English had fallen at Orleans, and a panic seized them everywhere. The Lord Talbot, who was now left in command, evacuated the different ports and towns, and retreated towards Paris.

At Patay he was met by a reinforcement of 4,000 men, and made a stand. Sir John Fastolf, who had brought these troops, advised further retreat, but Talbot refused. While the commanders debated the point, the French were upon them; and Talbot, who saw himself on a flat, open country, endeavoured, but too late, to secure his rear by a village and fenced enclosures. On the other side, the French commanders, dreading an attack of the English in the open field, remembering Agincourt and Verneuil, advised waiting for additional cavalry, but Joan indignantly exclaimed, "Have you not good spears? Ride on in the name of the Lord; the English are delivered into my hands,—you have only to smite them!" So saying, she led the way in charge, and the men clamoured to follow. La Hire and Saintrailles dashed on with the Maid, and broke into the very midst of the English before they had time to form. Fastolf without striking a blow, led off his men; and the brave Talbot, fighting amid heaps of his slain soldiers, was taken, with the Lord Scales and Hungerford, and the bulk of the officers. Twelve hundred of the English lay dead on the field.

In this moment of victory Joan again urged on Charles to march to Rheims, and be crowned. At this the contemptible king, who on all occasions of danger kept aloof, shrank back. The distance was great, the whole way was full of strong towns in the hands of the English and Burgundians. His officers supported him in this view, but the undaunted Maid upbraided them with their want of faith, after so many wondrous proofs of the truth of her promises.

She strove wisely to reconcile Charles to the Constable, the Count of Richemont, whom La Tremouille, the king's favourite, hated and feared; but in vain. Not only Richemont with his troops, but many other knights, were refused attendance in the court, and with these diminished forces Charles set forward on the road to Rheims. But everywhere the fortified towns fell before them. Auxerre made a treaty of submission, but Troyes for a time held out. As the soldiers suffered greatly in the siege for want of provisions, they began to lose faith in Joan, and openly to insult her as a foul witch. The murmurs of the base soldiery were quickly seized upon by the Archbishop of Rheims, who had always expressed his disbelief in Joan's inspiration, and the poor maid was summoned before the council, and interrogated like a criminal. But with a simple and fearless eloquence she made the leaders feel ashamed of their doubts. She challenged them to follow her to the walls, and see them surmounted, and she prevailed. With bags of earth and fagots the soldiers filled up the ditch, and were preparing with scaling-ladders to pour over the walls in a frenzy of enthusiasm, when a parley was demanded by the besieged, and the notorious Friar Richard, who figured so much in the camp from this time, made terms of surrender. As Joan was in the act of passing the city gate at the head of the troops, the friar, still believing that he had to do with an imp of Satan, crossed himself in great agitation with many crosses, and sprinkled holy water on the threshold of the gate. Instead of seeing the Maid resolve herself into a hideous demon and vanish away, or find herself unable to cross the threshold, he beheld her march on calm and unmoved; and at once he pronounced her an angel, and the people flocked round with admiring wonder. From that hour Friar Richard became a zealous ally of the king, though often relapsing into doubt of the Maid and into bigoted opposition to her. He now, however, went on preaching to the people of the neighbouring towns to rise in defence of the king, and drive out the Burgundians. Châlons sent Charles the keys of the town, and on arriving at Rheims, he found that the people had risen at the approach of the Maid, had driven out the adherents of Bedford and Burgundy, and received him with open arms. A grand procession of priests waited to accompany the king and the Maid into the city, and on the 15th of July, 1429, Charles and Joan, attended by all the chief officers, marched into the city preceded by the banners of the Church, and amid the sound of its hymns. Two days after this, Charles VII. was crowned in the cathedral, as the Maid had promised him.

But in entering on so stupendous a mission as the salvation of the nation, a humble village girl like Joan had entered on the field of martyrdom. From such a career there could be no retreat but through death. The same voices which she invariably avowed had called her to the enterprise, had pronounced her early doom. The enthusiasm of the multitude is short-lived; the envy and the hatred of the military chiefs, scarcely suppressed during the hour of triumph, were eternal in their nature. She had snatched the prestige of invincibility from the English, and raised the spirit of France. This had to be avenged. In the meantime, however, she was too indispensable to the completion of the conquest of France. Charles resolutely refused to listen to her tears and prayers to be permitted to withdraw. But from that hour the Maid was no longer the same. The spirit had departed from her. She was dejected, and full of distress. When importuned to direct what should next be done, she was uncertain and confused, which she never had been before. Bedford was exerting himself to check this unexampled progress of the French. Cardinal Beaufort came over with 2,000 archers and 250 men-at-arms. Every means was used to fix the alliance of the wavering Burgundy, who, however, gave no essential assistance. He had withdrawn his garrisons from Normandy, and the constable had seized them. Bedford was compelled to march himself from Paris to recover them; and the Maid, who had hung up her arms in the Church of St. Denis, at Rheims, as the sign that her mission was over, was induced by the king to assume them again. Once in her old panoply, her courage, if not her confidence, seemed to revive. She advised the monarch to march on Paris while Bedford was absent. She led the way and Soissons, Senlis, Beauvais, and St. Denis, opened their gates. At the assault on the Faubourg St. Honoré, Joan was again wounded, and left in the ditch for hours. Charles, mortified at the repulse, retired in dudgeon to Bourges; and Joan, again hanging up her armour, implored her dismissal. Charles refused, and endeavoured to fix her in his interest by granting her a patent of nobility, with an income equal to that of an earl, and freed her native parish of Domrémy from all taxation for ever. The unhappy Maid went on; but her voices were gone, and she was no longer a safe oracle. During the winter, indeed, Friar Richard had brought forward his rival prophetess—one Catherine of La Rochelle—who undertook, not to fight, but to raise money, by preaching to the populace and revealing hidden treasures. Joan refused any connection with her, declaring that success lay at the point of the lance.

In May, 1430, Joan was sent to raise the siege of Compiègne, which was invested by the Duke of Burgundy. She fought her way into the city with her accustomed valour, but, in making a sortie, was deserted by her followers, and bravely fighting her way back to the city, just as she approached the gates, she was dragged from her horse by an archer, and, as she lay on the ground, she surrendered to the Bastard of Vendôme.

The news of the capture of the terrible Maid flew like lightning through the Burgundian camp. All the officers of the army ran to gaze at her, the duke himself amongst them. Monstrelet, the historian, who recounts these transactions, was present on the occasion.

And now came the dark termination to this brilliant and wonderful episode in the history of these wars of France—even that which Joan herself had foretold. The base King of France abandoned her to the tender mercies of her enemies. When the news reached the English quarters, they sang *Te Deum* in their exultation.

Pope Martin V. demanded her that he might consign her to the benign offices of the Holy Inquisition. But the Bastard of Vendôme had sold his captive to John of Luxembourg, and he sold her to the English for 10,000 francs. During the winter she lay in prison, her friends seemed to have forgotten her, and her enemies were ravenous for her destruction. There was one general cry for her being burnt as a witch; and so fierce was the popular feeling in Paris that a poor woman was actually burnt for merely saying that she believed Joan had been sent by Heaven. She was carried from one dungeon to another, to Beaurevoir, to Arras, to Crotoy, and, finally, to Rouen. There the Bishop of Beauvais, a man devoted to the English interests, claimed to conduct her trial. He was a servile tool of Bedford, hoping for preferment through him; and Bedford had long declared that Joan was "a disciple and limb of the fiend:" therefore, the result was quite certain. Her trial was opened on the 13th of February, 1431.

On sixteen different days Joan was brought before the court, and interrogated with all the subtlety of the most celebrated priests, doctors, and lawyers that could be found. There were upwards of a hundred of these grave, learned men arrayed against this simple girl. They tried every means of entrapping her into admissions of the evil agency of her spiritual prompters; but the noble damsel remained calm, clear, and undaunted in her demeanour. When they interrogated her as to her attachment to the Church, she reminded them of her constant resort to its altars and services; but she made the fatal confession that when her voices gave different advice she followed them, as of higher authority than the Church. The court condemned her as an impious heretic and impostor; and the Parliament of Paris and the University, besides various eminent prelates who were consulted, confirmed the justice of the sentence.

The treatment of poor Joan in prison was still more infamous than in open court. When condemned as a heretic to be burned, her cell was haunted by monks and confessors, who described her death to her in the most terrible language, and wearied her with entreaties to confess and escape so frightful a death. A woman's fears at length got the better of her: she consented, and was brought out publicly in the cemetery of St. Ouen. where a friar addressed her before the assembled English and Burgundians, and the citizens of Rouen, describing the enormity of her crimes, and the infamy of her conduct as a woman. Joan bore all this in patience; but when he proceeded to defame the king, her loyalty broke out, and she warmly defended him. Her punishment was commuted to perpetual imprisonment.

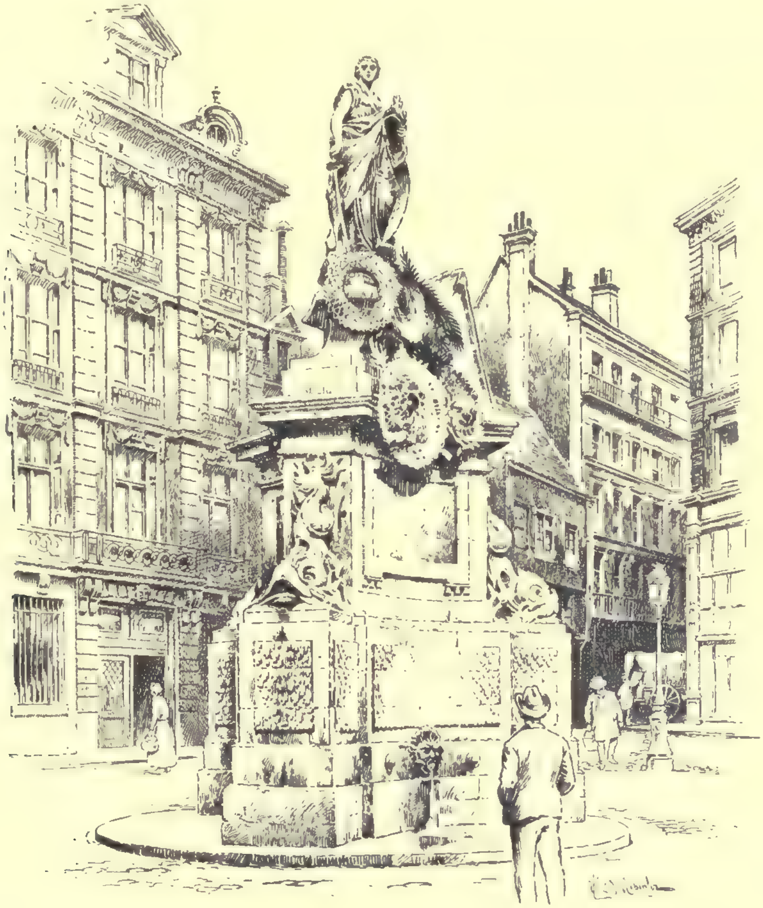
TRIAL OF JOAN OF ARC. (*See p.* 595.)

But this did not satisfy the vengeful longings of her enemies. To her mitigated sentence was attached an oath which she swore, never, on penalty of death, again to assume male attire. This was made a snare for her. During sleep her own garments were taken away, and those of a man put in their place. On awaking, she put on a portion of the only attire left her, and no sooner was this the case, than her guards, who were on the watch, rushed in, and conducted her, thus arrayed, to the officers. On this forced breach of her oath, judgment of death by fire, as a relapsed heretic, was at once pronounced; and on the 30th of May she was brought to the stake in the little market-place, since called the Place de la Pucelle, in memory of her.

When she had been conducted back to her cell, after her second condemnation, she confessed her guilt to God in that she had been weak enough to deny the power by which He had led her to do His will for France. Her "voices" came back to her; she was filled with new courage, and with beautiful visions. When she was brought out, and saw the horrible apparatus of death, her fortitude failed her, and she was led, sobbing to the stake. When she saw the fire kindled, she grasped a crucifix convulsively, and called loudly on the Almighty for support, and she was thus seen when the dense smoke enveloped her, praying to Christ for mercy

Thus perished the most pure, noble, and remarkable heroine in history, for the crime of saving her country. Numbers of her companions, of all ranks, were living when her history was written, who all united in testimony to the purity of her life and the wonder of her deeds. Her ashes were scattered on the Seine; but twenty-five years later, the infamous judgment which had been passed upon her was reversed by the Archbishop of Rheims and the Bishop of Paris.

The ceremony of the coronation of Charles VII. at Rheims appearing to give him a more confirmed title to the crown of France in the eyes of the people, Bedford resolved to crown Henry of England also there. Henry was now in his tenth year, a boy amiable but weakly, both in body and mind. He had received the royal unction in Westminster; and from that moment the title of protector was dropped, and that of prime counsellor only given to Gloucester. Both France and England had at this period so completely exhausted themselves by their wars, that it was six months before money could be raised sufficient to defray the expenses of Henry's coronation journey. It was then procured by loan. Gloucester was appointed the king's lieutenant during his absence; and Beaufort, now Cardinal of Winchester, accompanied the latter. Henry proceeded to Rouen but the boast of Bedford that he would crown him in Rheims appeared every day farther from any prospect of accomplishment; and, after eighteen months' abode of the king at Rouen, it was resolved to crown him in Paris. From Pontoise to Paris the youthful king, accompanied by the principal English nobles and 3,000 horse, advanced in state; and great processions of the clergy, the members of the Estates General, the magistrates, and citizens came out to meet him. Triumphal arches were erected, various devices were exhibited, mysteries enacted, and a show of festivity was presented; but the whole was



PLACE DE LA PUCELLE, ROUEN.

(*Photo: Neurdein Freres, Paris.*)

hollow. There was no real joy on such a ceremony, which, to the Parisians, was but a mark of subjugation to a foreign yoke. The entire aspect of the affair was English, not French. Cardinal Beaufort performed the ceremony; the great officers of state surrounding the throne were English. Not a single prince or peer of France condescended to attend on the occasion—not even Burgundy, the ally of the young monarch. When crowned, there was no loyal desire to retain the monarch amongst them. Henry was not at home there, and, in a few days, went back to Rouen, where he resided a year, and, after a visit to Calais, returned to London.

In the meantime, the disposition of the French to return to the allegiance of their own prince became still more conspicuous in the provinces than in the capital. The atrocious cruelty of the English to their heroine, though it had been passively permitted by the Government, revolted and incensed the people. Everywhere the new spirit which she had evoked showed itself in the greater daring and success of the French generals. Dunois surprised and took Chartres. Lord Willoughby was defeated at St. Celerin-sur-Sarthe. The fair of Caen, the capital of Normandy was pillaged by De Lore, a French officer; and Dunois, emboldened by his success, even compelled the Duke of Bedford to raise the siege of Lagny.

But, far beyond these petty advantages, every day demonstrated that the unnatural alliance of the Duke of Burgundy with England against his own sovereign was hastening to an end. Nothing but the duke's resentment against Charles for the murder of his father could have led him to this alliance; and nothing but the decided ascendency of the English could have retained him in it. That ascendency was evidently shaken; the English influence was on the wane, the spirit of the French people was rising in bolder form against it; and Charles, who seemed at length to acquire a politic character, made earnest overtures to the duke for reconciliation. The humiliations and distresses to which Charles had long been subjected had gratified the revenge of Burgundy, and he was now sufficiently cool to perceive as clearly as any one that nothing in reality could be more fatal to his interests than the union of France and England under one crown. The English had already given him more than one cause of offence; he did not forget that Bedford had refused to surrender the government of the Duchy of Orleans to him when it had been given him by the English council And now, while Charles was assiduously courting him, and he was in this tone of mind, Bedford unluckily added fresh and deep cause of resentment.

Ann of Burgundy, Duchess of Bedford, sister of Philip, died at Paris, in November, 1432. Here was snapped a bond of union which, by the judicious endeavours of the duchess, had proved a strong one. In two months after her death, Bedford, who could not plead the impetuosity or thoughtlessness of youth, married Jacquetta of Luxembourg, a vassal of Burgundy, and that without giving the slightest announcement of his intention to the duke. Burgundy felt the proceeding a direct insult to the memory of his sister, and probably Bedford was quite as conscious of the fact, and, therefore, had omitted to communicate his intention to Philip. Philip expressed his resentment in no measured terms, and Bedford retorted with equal indignation. There were numerous individuals at the Burgundian court ready to fan the flame of dissension. The Count of Richemont and the Duke of Brittany had long been striving to carry over Philip to the French side. The Duke of Bourbon, who had also married a sister of Philip, threw his weight most joyfully into the scale.

The Cardinal of Winchester, who, whatever his feuds with Gloucester, had long been giving the most prudent counsel, in the exhausted state of the finances of both countries, to attempt a peace, now saw with consternation this quarrel, which threatened to throw Burgundy into the arms of Charles, and thus augment immensely the difficulties of England. He hastened to interpose his good offices, and prevailed upon the two incensed princes to consent to a meeting at St. Omer. But here the old proverb of bringing a horse to water was seen in its full force. Each duke expected that the other should make the first visit. Bedford stood upon his being the son, brother, and uncle to a king, and Philip upon the greatness of his own independent dominions. Neither would condescend to make the first move, and they parted with only increased bitterness. Bedford, in this case, permitted his pride to sway him from his usual prudence, and, though he did not live long, it was long enough to cause him deeply to repent his folly.

The Duke of Burgundy was now quite prepared to reconcile himself to Charles. A point of honour only stood in the way, and diplomacy is never at a loss to get rid of such little obstacles. By the treaty of Troyes he was solemnly sworn never to make peace with Charles without consent of the English. To surmount this difficulty, either by establishing an actual peace between the three parties, or by so far putting the English in the wrong as to justify in the eyes of the world a peace without it, it was suggested by his brothers-in-law, Richemont and Bourbon, to endeavour to get up a congress under the mediation of the Pope, as the common friend and father of all Christian princes. Eugenius IV. set himself with alacrity to effect this desirable but difficult work, and prevailed so far as to have a grand congress summoned to meet at Arras, in August, 1435.

To give effect to this assembly, care was taken to render it the most illustrious convocation of princes and diplomatists which Europe had yet seen. The Pontiff sent as his representative the Cardinal of Santa Croce; the Council of Basle then sitting also delegated the Cardinal of Cyprus. The Duke of Burgundy, one of the most powerful, and by far the most magnificent prince of the age, came attended by all the nobility of his states. Beaufort, Cardinal of Winchester, represented his relative, the King of England, attended by twenty-six nobles, half English and half French. Charles VII. appointed as his plenipotentiaries the Duke of Bourbon and the Constable Richemont, who were attended by twenty-nine peers and ministers. Besides these there came envoys from Norway, Denmark, Poland, and Sicily, from many of the German and Italian states, and from the cities of Flanders, and of the Hanseatic League.

If the object was to exhibit the hauteur and unreasonableness of England rather than that of showing the enormous difficulties in the way, the stratagem fully succeeded. The French plenipotentiaries offered to cede Guienne and Normandy to the English, but subject to the conditions of homage and vassalage. The English, who were not disposed to abate a jot their demands of independent possession of all the lands they now held in France, were so indignant at what they considered the arrogance of this proposal, that they abruptly refused to submit any counter-proposition of their own, but rose and left the assembly. On this there was a general outcry against the intolerable pride and unreasonableness of the English. The fact was, that the two cardinals, who came openly as mediators, were in reality the decided partisans of France and Burgundy. Every means was now used to represent the conduct of the English in the most odious light, and a draft of a treaty ready prepared between Burgundy and France was openly produced, considered, and signed on the 21st of September. The English had already left Arras on the 6th. No sooner was the ratification of this treaty made known, than universal rejoicings took place throughout France and Burgundy. On the other hand, the English loaded the Duke of Burgundy with the bitterest reproaches, as a perjured violator of the treaty of Troyes.

Charles, on his part, had been compelled not only to implore Philip's forgiveness of the murder of his father, but to surrender to Burgundy all the towns of Picardy lying between the Somme and the Low Countries, with other territories, to be held for life without fealty or homage. The sacrifices of honour and domain had been enough between the parties to lay the foundation for future heartburnings, had the English but acted with tolerable policy; but their violent conduct tended to draw off a too scrutinising glance from the new allies, and to cement their union. To add to the mischief, Bedford died at Rouen immediately after receiving the news of this disastrous treaty. He had been an able and prudent manager of the English affairs in France, but he had not been a successful one. Circumstances had fought against him. The distractions of the council at home, and the consequent diminution of his resources, had crippled him. The strange apparition of the Maid of Orleans had set at defiance all human counsels. His horrible execution of that innocent and most meritorious damsel had sullied his reputation for humanity, and his haughty conduct to the Duke of Burgundy had equally injured the estimation of his political wisdom. The sudden rending of that old tie, and the power with which it invested France, hastened, as it undoubtedly darkened, his end. He was buried on the right hand of the high altar of the Cathedral of Rouen, where his grave yet meets the eye of the English traveller.

Three days after the signing of the treaty of Arras, died also Isabella of Bavaria, one of the most infamous women who ever figured in history. The deed which united her old ally Burgundy with her own son whom she hated with a most unnatural hatred was to her the crowning point of her deserved misfortunes. She left a memory equally abhorred by French and English.

The affairs of England in France demanded the utmost promptitude and address, but this important moment was wasted through the violence of the factions of Gloucester and Beaufort. The cardinal endeavoured to secure the appointment of his nephew Edmund Beaufort, afterwards Duke of Somerset, as regent of France; but the Duke of Gloucester insisted on the choice of Richard, Duke of York, who was finally adopted; but not till six months of invaluable time had been wasted. Before his arrival the French had profited by the delay to recover Melun, Pontoise, and other places on the Seine. Richemont had been active in Normandy, exciting the people to revolt, and Dieppe was surprised. The Duke of Burgundy—though his subjects, who had much commerce with England, were averse from a war with this country, and the people of Picardy, who had been made over to him, were in rebellion—still was actively preparing for an attack on Calais. Paris had thrown off the English yoke. The Parisians had always been attached to the Duke of Burgundy, and equally ready to renew their allegiance to Charles. In the night they opened the gates to Lisle Adam and the Count Dunois; threw chains across the streets to prevent the entrance of the English; and the Lord Willoughby, first retreating with his garrison to the Bastille, then made terms to evacuate the city.

The turn which was given to affairs immediately on the arrival of the Duke of York showed what might have been done by a more prompt occupation of his post. The Duke landed in Normandy with 8,000 men. He soon reduced the towns which had revolted or surrendered to the enemy. Talbot defeated an army near Rouen; he retook Pontoise in the midst of a fall of snow by dressing a body of men in white, and concealing them in a ditch. He then advanced to Paris, and carried desolation to its very walls, but failed to take it.

Meanwhile, the Duke of Burgundy had invested Calais. The Duke of Gloucester, with a fleet of 500 sail, and carrying 15,000 men, set out to raise the siege, and landed at Calais on the 2nd of August, 1436. Philip did not wait for this army; he hastily abandoned the siege, or rather his troops—a wretched rabble of militia from Ghent, Bruges, Ypres, and other Flemish towns—abandoned him. They had fought too much with the English to venture to fight against them, and, at the first approach of Gloucester, they ran in a wild panic. The contagion became general, and the whole army, men-at-arms, archers, everything, 30,000 in number, decamped with such precipitation as to leave behind them all their artillery, ammunition, and baggage. The Count of Richemont, the Constable of France, who had come to witness the recovery of Calais from the English, was borne away in the rueful flight, to his infinite chagrin. Gloucester, who arrived four days after this disgraceful retreat, made instant pursuit, sending messengers to Philip to beg him to stop as he had promised, and measure lances with him; but the humbled duke made no halt. The English now rushed furiously into Flanders, plundering town and country, the soldiers making a rich booty, and Gloucester paying the duke off the old scores incurred by his conduct to Gloucester's first wife, Jacqueline of Hainault.

On the 3rd of January, 1438, died Queen Catherine, the widow of Henry V. Soon after the death of Catherine's illustrious husband she retired to an obscurity which was scarcely broken during the remaining fifteen years of her life. She had fixed her affections on a handsome yeoman of the guard, Owen Tudor, a Welshman. His father had been one of the followers of Owen Glendower, and he himself was at Agincourt with Henry V., where, for his bravery in repelling the fiery charge of the Duke of Alençon, Henry made him one of the squires of his body. It was in this post, keeping guard at Windsor when Catherine retired there with the infant Henry VI., that he attracted the queen's attention. Despite his humble condition—for he could not then be worth forty pounds a year, or he must have taken up his knighthood—Catherine, the proud daughter of the kings of France, did not disdain to bestow upon him her favour, and eventually her hand. This marriage was, of course, concealed with all possible care. So completely was this the case, that no proof of it whatever exists, or has been discovered; not even the research of Henry VII., her grandson, with all his boast of royal descent, could obtain it. Yet no doubt whatever seems to have existed of the reality of the marriage. Gloucester, the protector, was highly incensed at this act of Catherine, regarding it as a disgrace to the royal family. It appears clearly that, though he was aware that the husband of Catherine was a plebeian, he was not aware of his identity, for Tudor continued to reside with the queen till about six months before her death.

Tudor and Catherine had four children—a daughter, who died in infancy, and three sons. These sons were torn from her at the instigation of Gloucester; and the queen was forced to seek refuge in the abbey of Bermondsey. After the queen's death, which occurred when she was only thirty-six, and in consequence, it is supposed, of the persecutions and troubles which her marriage brought upon her, Tudor was seized and imprisoned in Newgate, but escaped into Wales; he was again dishonourably seized by Gloucester, notwithstanding a safe conduct from the king, and thrown into the dungeon of Wallingford Castle. Thence he was remanded again to Newgate, whence he once more escaped. He was admitted to some small favour by Henry VI., and made keeper of his parks in Denbigh, Wales; and was finally taken, fighting against him, by Edward IV., and beheaded in the market-place of Hereford in 1461. Such is the history of the rise of the royal line of Tudor, corrupted from Theodore, the original family name.

The three sons of Owen Tudor and Catherine were acknowledged and ennobled by Henry VI. The eldest, Edmond, was made Earl of Richmond, married to Margaret Beaufort, the heiress of the house of Somerset, and took precedence of all peers. He died at the early age of twenty, yet left one infant son, afterwards Henry VII. The second son of Catherine, Jasper Tudor, was created Earl of Pembroke. The third son became a monk of Westminster.

In France the English still continued to wage a various war, but not sufficiently brilliant to give interest to a detailed account of it. In 1437 Philip of Burgundy again ventured abroad, and laid siege to Crotoy, at the mouth of the Somme. Talbot marched from Normandy with a small army of 4,000 men. Reaching St. Valery over night, the next morning they plunged into the ford of Blanchetaque—so well known since Edward III. crossed it at Creçy—and attacked its besiegers, who hastily drew off to Abbeville. Talbot ravaged the country round, and returned into Normandy laden with spoil.

DENBIGH.

(From a Photograph by Catherall & Pritchard.)

In May of this year the Duke of York was recalled, and was succeeded by Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, who achieved nothing remarkable, and died at Rouen in less than two years. During his government both England and France were exempt from war, but ravaged by famine and pestilence.

In 1439 the Count of Richemont, the Constable of France, recovered the city of Meaux from Talbot; and Talbot, on his part, accompanied by the Earl of Somerset, besieged Harfleur, and took it after a difficult siege. Talbot was, in fact, at this time, the brave supporter of the English power in France. Two years after this time he raised the siege of Pontoise, which was invested by an army of 12,000 men; but all his valour could not preserve it. In 1442 and 1443 there were some advantages gained by the French in Guienne, and these were counterpoised by greater successes of the English in Maine, Picardy, and Anjou. Both parties were weary of the war, yet neither would recede from its high claims. The Pope from time to time urged the combatants, as Christians, to lay aside their animosities, and make peace; and to this desirable object Isabella, Duchess of Burgundy, a descendant of John of Gaunt, lent her persuasions, and succeeded, by the co-operation of Cardinal Beaufort, in obtaining a cessation of hostilities for an indefinite period. The Duke of Orleans, after a captivity of twenty-five years, was now liberated on condition of paying a ransom of 200,000 crowns by fixed instalments. Returning to France, he added his endeavours to those of the advocates for peace, and a truce was at length signed on the 28th of May, 1444, for two years, and by subsequent treaties it was prolonged till April, 1450. It was high time that some respite was given to the wretched people of France, who for so many years had borne the brunt of these deadly contests. Cardinal Beaufort said that more perished in these wars than there were now in the two kingdoms. The late famine and plague had depopulated France still further; and the wasted country was infested by bands of thieves, vagabonds, cut-throats of every description, chiefly deserted soldiers, who committed the most horrible crimes.

Henry of England was now in his twenty-fourth year. His character was that of a mild, kind-hearted, and pious youth, but weak; and, like all weak princes, prone to surround himself with favourites. From the accounts that have reached us it is clear that, as a private man, he would have been good and happy; as a king, he was destined to become the dupe of some stronger mind, and the victim of faction. During the whole of his minority, his two powerful kinsmen, the Duke of Gloucester and Cardinal Beaufort, had kept up round the throne a fierce contest for preeminence. Gloucester was warm-tempered but generous, and greatly beloved by the people, who called him the "good Duke Humphrey." He is said to have been better educated than most princes of his time, to have been fond of men of talent, and to have founded one of the first public libraries in England. The cardinal was a man of a more calculating and politic temperament. He was well known to be cherishing the hope of grasping the pontifical tiara. Each of these nobles was in daily strife for the possession of the king's person, and, through it, for the chief power in the realm. The duke was a great advocate for the vigorous prosecution of the war, and pleased the people by advocating an ascendency over the French. Beaufort was as earnest for peace, and thence his popularity with the Church on the Continent. This feud was brought to a climax in 1439 by the debate on the question of the release of the Duke of Orleans. Gloucester opposed it on the ground that his brother, Henry V., had left it as a solemn command that none of the captives of Agincourt should ever be ransomed. Beaufort advocated it on the plea that Orleans would use his influence in France for peace. Beaufort prevailed, and Gloucester, in chagrin, delivered to the king a list of political charges against the cardinal.

Things were at this pass when an accusation of sorcery and high treason was got up against the Duchess of Gloucester. The Duke had married Eleanor Cobham, the daughter of Lord Reginald Cobham, who had been his mistress. Though he had thus made her his wife, her enemies never forgot the circumstances of the duchess's prior situation. It was kept alive as a source of mortification to the duke. Instead of her legitimate title, they persisted in calling her Dame Eleanor Cobham. She is represented as a bold, ambitious, dissolute, and avaricious woman. The duchess was examined in St. Stephen's Chapel, Westminster, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and charged with having obtained love-philters to secure the affection of her husband. But a much more horrible and absurd charge was that she had procured a wax figure, which was so moulded by art, that when placed before the fire, as it melted away, the flesh of the king would melt away also, his marrow dry up, and his health fade. Eight-and-twenty such charges were preferred against Dame Eleanor and her companions, some of which she is said to have admitted, but the majority and the worst to have denied; and on such ridiculous pleas she was condemned on three days of the week to walk bareheaded, and bearing a lighted taper in her hand, through the streets of London, and afterwards to be confined for life in the Isle of Man, in the custody of Sir John Stanley.

At this crisis the marriage of the king was resolved upon. Each party put forth all its energy to secure such a partner as should be likely to incline to its interests, for if the queen should be a woman of ability, she would, with the king's peculiar character, be certain to establish a permanent influence over him; and this circumstance would decide for ever the long contest between them. Gloucester recommended a daughter of the Count of Armagnac, on the ground that Armagnac was the enemy of Charles VII., and, in alliance with England, would add greatly to the strength of the province of Guienne. But no sooner did the proposal reach the ears of Charles, than to prevent so disastrous an occurrence, he invaded the territory of the count, and made him and his family prisoners. The Beaufort party now pressed on their advantage, and strongly represented the benefits to be hoped from the choice of Margaret of Anjou, the daughter of Réné, titular King of Sicily and Jerusalem, and Duke of Anjou, Maine, and Bar. Margaret had a great reputation for beauty and talent. She was said to be one of the most superior women of the age, and besides this, she was cousin to the Queen of France, greatly admired by Charles himself, and generally resident at his court.

The people from the first marked their dislike of the alliance. They were not fond of French princesses, and Gloucester, who always represented the popular idea, opposed it with all his eloquence. But the Beaufort party carried it against him. The prime mover of the scheme was William de la Pole, the Earl of Suffolk. He was a sworn partisan of Beaufort, with Somerset and Buckingham. He had been residing at the French court, was in high favour there, and there were not wanting rumours of a too familiar intimacy betwixt himself and the proposed queen. Strongly seconded by the Beaufort party in opposition to Gloucester, he was commissioned to negotiate this marriage; and—to give him absolute and irresponsible power in the matter—a most singular and unusual guarantee was granted by the king, and approved by Parliament, against any future penalties for his proceedings in the matter. Armed with this dangerous and suspicious document, Suffolk hastened to France, met the Duke of Orleans at Tours, and concluded a truce, during which the question of the marriage might be discussed, and which, if the issue were successful, might terminate in a peace.

The conduct of Suffolk throughout the negotiation was such as made it obvious that he had not secured a previous indemnity for nothing. The father of Margaret, though titular King of Sicily and Jerusalem, was in reality a pauper. He did not possess a single foot of land in the countries over which his royal title extended. Maine and Anjou, his hereditary dukedoms, were in the hands of the English. Under these circumstances, the most that could be expected was that England should be willing to receive the princess without a dower. But Suffolk not only waived any claim of dower, but resigned, as a condition of the marriage, the duchies of Maine and Anjou to Margaret's father. This was a direct act of high treason. These duchies were the very keys of Normandy, and their cession highly endangered all the English possessions in France. Nothing but the most consummate folly, or, what was more probable, the blinding influence which the daughter of King Réné already exerted over Suffolk, could have induced him to perpetrate such a deed. This condition was kept in the background as long as possible. Whether Beaufort had been a party to this infamous measure, or whether he was duped himself by Suffolk, does not appear. He was now an old man of seventy-eight, and since his signal vengeance on Gloucester, by the disgrace and punishment of his wife, had retired to his diocese, apprehensive lest there might come a repayment of the injury from Gloucester or his staunch admirers, the people.

Suffolk for his success in this negotiation was created a marquis; he married Margaret as proxy for Henry at Nancy on the 28th of October, 1444. Jousts and tournaments were celebrated by the French court in its joy over this event, from which it expected no ordinary advantages. Suffolk does not appear to have been in any haste to return to England with the fair bride; for, though contracted in October, they remained in France all the winter, and landed at Porchester only on the 8th of April, 1445. Great ceremony had been made by the French court on Margaret's departure. The king himself, with a splendid retinue, accompanied her some miles on her way from the city, and separated from her in tears. Her father continued with her to Bar-le-Duc.

On the 22nd of April she was married in Titchfield Abbey to Henry, and on the 30th of May she was crowned with much splendour at Westminster, and very soon showed that she was prepared to exercise to the full her royal authority. The king, charmed with her beauty and address, resigned himself a willing creature into her hands. She formed an immediate and close intimacy with the Beaufort party; her constant counsellors were Somerset, Buckingham, and Suffolk. Suffolk appeared to the people much more the husband of Margaret than Henry. One of the first acts of the queen's party was to procure a repeal of the Act of Henry V., that no peace should be made with France without the consent of the three estates of the Parliament. They obtained ample supplies, and from both Houses the most profuse thanks to Suffolk for his services in accomplishing this happy union.

All things now concurred to favour a blow which should gratify the malice of Suffolk. By some means he contrived to infuse into the mind of Henry a suspicion of the loyalty of his uncle Gloucester. Perhaps the repeated instances in which Gloucester had brought forward the Duke of York, in opposition to Suffolk's party, might be alleged as the cause of their vengeance. The Duke of York was the claimant of the throne in right of the Earl of March, a right superior to the usurped claim of the present line, and which he afterwards asserted. Whatever the cause, or combination of causes, the destruction of Gloucester was determined. Henry summoned a Parliament to meet, not, as usual, at Westminster, but at Bury St. Edmunds, in Suffolk, where the conspirators would be in the midst of the favourite's retainers. The measures which were adopted were ominous. The knights of the shire were ordered to come in arms. The king was conveyed to the town under strong escort, and the men of Suffolk were placed in numerous bodies round the royal lodgings. All the avenues to the town were guarded during the night by pickets of soldiers.

ANGEL OF HENRY VI.

The Duke of Gloucester, clearly suspecting no harm, went from his castle of Devizes to the opening of the Parliament, where everything was conducted with the usual form, and nothing took place at all calculated to excite suspicion. But the next day, the 11th of February, 1447, the Lord Beaumont, Constable of England, attended by the Duke of Buckingham, and several of the peers of Suffolk's party, arrested Gloucester, seizing, at the same time, all his attendants, and consigning them to different prisons. The Suffolk party now openly avowed that Gloucester had formed a scheme to kill the king, to usurp the throne, liberate his duchess, and make her queen. The story was too improbable to receive credence; it was therefore dropped, and Gloucester remained seventeen days in prison, awaiting his trial.

When summoned, at length, to attend the council, he was found dead in his bed, to the great horror of the king, who was obviously unprepared for such a catastrophe. The body was exposed to the view of the Parliament and the people, to convince them that there had been no violence used. There were no marks of violence, indeed, upon it; but this had no weight with the people, who recollected that such had been the case in the mysteriously sudden deaths of Edward II., Richard II., and of the former unfortunate Duke of Gloucester, who had, under precisely similar circumstances, perished in the prison of Calais in Richard II.'s time. One historian only of the time, Whethamstede, Abbot of St. Albans, has avowed his belief that the duke died from natural causes, and great weight has been given to his opinion, because he was attached to the duke, and loud in his abuse of his enemies. It is, however, but one opinion against a host; and all the circumstances tend to support the popular belief that Gloucester was murdered, though with great cunning and skill. It is improbable, however, that Margaret or the Cardinal had any hand in the deed.

Cardinal Beaufort survived his great rival only six weeks. Every reader recalls the celebrated death-scene of this prelate as described by Shakespeare, King Henry at his bedside, exclaiming—

> "Lord cardinal, if thou think'st on heaven's bliss,
> Hold up thy hand, make signal of thy hope.—
> He dies, and makes no sign. O God, forgive him."

The situation and invocation are undoubtedly those of the poet; but they are founded on the widespread belief at the time that Beaufort had the blood of Gloucester on his soul. Nevertheless, as he had retired entirely from public life, it is extremely improbable that this belief had any foundation. Beaufort may have been ambitious, but his character on the whole was very elevated. The disposition of his wealth was noble, being chiefly devoted to public and charitable purposes. He left £4,000—equal to £40,000 now—for the relief of poor prisoners in London. He gave £2,000 to two colleges founded by the king at

Eton and Cambridge; and the rest founded the hospital of St. Cross at Winchester, now of immense value. He was buried in the cathedral of Winchester, in the beautiful chantry which still elicits so much admiration from the beholder.

The article in the marriage treaty of the queen, which stipulated for the cession of Anjou and Maine, had been kept as secret as possible during the life of the cardinal; but circumstances now rendered it impossible to hide it any longer. The court of France insisted on the surrender of the provinces. When these demands could be no longer resisted—for Charles prepared to invade the provinces—an order under the hand of the king was sent to Sir Francis Surienne, the Governor of Le Mans, commanding him to surrender the place to Charles of Anjou. Surienne refused to retire, and the Count Dunois invested the city. Surienne was then compelled to surrender, and the Bishop of Chichester was despatched from England to give up the whole province, with the exception of Fresnoy. It was stated, however, that the King of England did not cede his right to the sovereignty of these states, but merely their enjoyment by the father and uncle of his wife for their natural lives; and it was promised that the grantees of the English crown should receive from France a sum of money equal to ten years' value of the lands they had lost.

The consequences were very speedily seen. Maine was filled with French troops, and the Duke of Somerset, the regent, announced to the council that the three estates of Normandy, encouraged by this change, had refused all supplies, and that unless immediate and effectual assistance were afforded from England these provinces would be lost. To make matters worse, Surienne, who had reluctantly surrendered Le Mans, and was refused by Somerset admittance into Normandy, as a dangerous and insubordinate officer, marched into Brittany, seized the town of Fougères, repaired the fortifications of Pontorson and St. Jacques de Beuvron, and levied subsistence on the whole province at will. The Duke of Brittany complained to Charles; Charles demanded prompt damages to the amount of 1,600,000 crowns, and instead of truce the whole war was opened again.

ARREST OF THE DUKE OF SUFFOLK. (*See p.* 608.)

These transactions occasioned a violent outbreak at home. The Earl of Suffolk was vehemently denounced by the people as a traitor, for the wanton surrender of Maine and Anjou to the French. Suffolk was compelled to demand to be brought face to face with his accusers before the king and council. The demand was granted. Both parties were heard, and, as might have been expected, Suffolk, the favourite of both king and queen, was acquitted of all blame, and pronounced to have done effectual service to the state.

The English exchequer was empty, and Charles of France, aware not only of that, but of the miserable feebleness of the Government, put forth all his energies to profit by the opportunity. A striking change seemed to have come over him with the advance of years. He attacked the corruption of the courts and magistracy; he rigorously reformed the discipline of the army; he set himself to restore order and vigour into the finances; and he took every means of reviving the arts and protecting and encouraging agriculture. It was with astonishment that those who had seen France a few years before now beheld the prosperity which was springing up, and the strength which was becoming visible.

The Duke of Somerset found himself destitute of money, for the Government at home was poor, and the people discontented; and Charles, putting himself at the head of his troops, fell upon Normandy, while the Duke of Brittany, the Duke of Alençon, and the Count Dunois, marched upon it simultaneously from different points. Wherever the French commanders appeared, the people threw open their gates, showing on which side their hearts lay The Duke of Somerset, so far from possessing an army capable of taking the field, had not even enough to man the garrisons, or provisions to support them.

The duke threw himself into Rouen, his sole trust there being in timely relief from England. He quickly found himself surrounded by an army 50,000 strong, led by the king himself. The spirit of revolt was not less active there than in other towns. A number of the citizens, pretending to be desirous to aid in the defence, were permitted to mount guard on the walls, which they at once betrayed into the hands of the French. The valour of Lord Talbot rescued them from that danger, but it was only to delay for awhile the surrender. Somerset capitulated on the 4th of November, 1449, consenting to pay 56,000 francs, and to give up Arques, Tancarville, Caudebec, Honfleur, and other places in High Normandy, and deliver Talbot as one of the hostages, thus depriving the English of the only general capable of rescuing them from their present dilemma. Harfleur made a stouter defence under Sir Thomas Curson, the governor, but was eventually compelled to yield to Dunois.

The indignation of the people in England at these alarming reverses compelled Suffolk to send some forces to Normandy, but in no proportion to the need. Sir Thomas Kyriel landed at Cherbourg with about 3,000 men, and collecting about as many more, advanced towards Caen, to which the regent Somerset had retreated. But he was met on the way, near Formigny, by the Count of Clermont. He gave battle with the ancient confidence in the superior valour of his countrymen, but after a severe contest of three hours, he was attacked by a second army, under Richemont, the Constable, which took him in flank and rear. The numbers were now utterly overwhelming, independent of the freshness of the new troops, and the surprise. Some of his ranks broke and fled, and others remained fighting hardily till they were cut down or made prisoners. Avranches, Bayeux, and Valognes opened their gates; the regent was besieged in Caen, and compelled to surrender. Cherbourg alone remained, but was soon after taken, and within twelve months the whole of the beautiful country of Normandy, which had been won by the valour of Henry V., with its seven bishoprics and hundred fortified towns, was lost to England for ever.

The campaign of 1452 was opened with some show of spirit. The people of Guienne, groaning under the load of taxation which Charles—consulting his necessity rather than his word, had laid upon them—had despatched a deputation to London, entreating that an army might be sent to their relief, and offering to renew their allegiance. The brave Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, who had so long fought in France, was sent over with 4,000 men, and his son, Lord Lisle, followed with as many more. Talbot was now eighty years of age, but full of a spirit and activity which seemed to know no decay. He very soon recovered Bordelais and Châtillon. In the spring of 1453, he opened the campaign by the capture of Fronsac, where the French army advanced against him, and Count Penthièvre invested Châtillon. Hastening to relieve that town, Talbot fell upon the French lines very early in the morning, and created such confusion, that he ordered a general assault on the camp, the entrenchments of which were lined with 300 pieces of cannon. While dashing forward on this formidable battery, his troops were attacked in the rear by another body of French which came up. Talbot had his horse killed under him. His leg was broken in the fall, and he was despatched with a spear as he lay on the ground. His son fell in the vain endeavour to rescue his father; and the army, on learning the death of its commander, dispersed in every direction. A thousand men, who had already penetrated into the camp, were made prisoners.

Charles, who now arrived, took the command of his victorious army, and led it to the gates of Bordeaux. That city, with Fronsac and Bayonne, still held out; but famine at length compelled them to surrender. Bayonne was the last to yield, but the Count Gaston de Foix besieging it with a large army of Basques and Béarnese, it was compelled to open its gates. And thus, in the autumn of 1453, closed the English dreams of empire in France, and the possession of all the territories which came to us with the Norman conquest, except Calais, and a strip of marshy land around it.

It is not to be supposed that this disgraceful termination of our French dominion, this melancholy antithesis to the glories of Creçy and Agincourt, was borne with indifference by the people of England. With Bedford and Talbot the military genius of the nation seemed to have disappeared. Somerset, who was ambitious of ruling at home, had shown in his character of Regent of France only a faculty for sitting still in fortified towns, so long as the enemy was not very urgent to drive him out. At the head of the Government now stood Suffolk and the queen; and, while their administration afforded no support to our commanders abroad, their folly and despotism at home incensed the whole nation. As loss after loss was proclaimed, the public exasperation had increased. The cession of Maine and Anjou had excited the deepest indignation; but when month after month had brought only news of the invasion of Normandy and the loss of town after town, the whole population appeared stung to madness. Suffolk was denounced as the queen's minion, as a man who was so besotted by the charms of a foreign woman as to sacrifice for his pleasure our fairest inheritance. On his head they heaped, not only his fair share of those transactions, but the full odium of the release of the Duke of Orleans, contrary to the injunction of the sagacious Henry V.; the murder of the duke of Gloucester; the emptiness of the State coffers, and all the consequent defeats and disasters.

To calm the public mind and to take measures for the defence of Normandy, a Parliament was summoned, but scarcely did it meet when the news of the fall of Rouen arrived, adding fresh fury to the popular wrath, and confusion to the counsels of the Government. Stormy debates and altercations continued in Parliament for six weeks, whilst succour should have been despatched to our army in Normandy.

Soon after, the Bishop of Chichester, keeper of the privy seal, who had been employed to complete the surrender of Maine to the French, was sent to Portsmouth to pay the soldiers and sailors about to embark for Guienne their then stipulated amount. No sooner did the people hear his name than—crying, "That is the traitor who delivered Maine to the French!"—they rose *en masse*, and seized him. In appealing to them to spare his life, he was reported to have bade the populace reflect that it was not he, but Suffolk, who had sold that province to France; that he himself was but the humble instrument employed to deliver what he had no power to keep; that it was Suffolk who was the traitor, and that he had boasted that he was as powerful in the French as in the English Government.

This explanation did not save the prelate's life, but it raised the fury of the people to the culminating point against Suffolk. He was not only represented as insolent and rapacious, as being the open paramour of the queen, and thus keeping the king as a mere puppet in his hands; as having not only murdered Gloucester and seized his possessions; but as having obtained exorbitant grants from the Crown, embezzled the public money, perverted justice, screened notorious offenders, supported iniquitous causes, and filled the offices of State with his vilest creatures. The powerful party which prosecuted the revenge of Gloucester's injuries, and now allied itself to the ambitious Duke of York, were the more numerously backed by the nobility, in that they regarded Suffolk with envy as a man who being but the grandson of a merchant, had risen over their heads, and made himself all but monarch.

This universal clamour against him compelled him to rise in his place immediately on the opening of Parliament, and endeavour to defend himself. He alluded to the report, industriously circulated, that he intended to marry his son to a daughter of Somerset, and through that alliance to aspire to the crown. He treated the rumour as most ridiculous, as no doubt it was, reminding the House of the deaths of his father and three brothers in the service of the country, at Agincourt, Jargeau, &c., and of his own long and severe service there. But his appeal had no other result than to induce the Commons to demand that, as on his own showing he lay under suspicions of treason, he should be impeached and committed to the Tower, in order to his trial. They asserted that he had invited the King of France to come over and make himself master of this country, and had furnished the castle of Wallingford with stores and provisions for the purpose of aiding him.

In the course of the trial the Commons appear to have grown sensible of the futility of the bulk of these charges against Suffolk, and a month after its commencement they concentrated the force of their complaints on the waste and embezzlement of the public revenue, and the odious means to which he had resorted for its replenishment. This was an accusation which would be echoed by every class and person almost in the nation. It was a very sore subject indeed. During the minority of the king, the rapacity of the courtiers had been, as usual in such cases, unbounded. The king's uncles had been utterly helpless to restrain it. It had crippled the resources for the war with France, and consequently led to its opprobrious termination. The royal demesnes were dissipated, and there was a debt against the king of £372,000, equal to nearly £4,000,000 of present money. This the Parliament protested that it neither could nor would pay.

When Suffolk was called on for his defence, he fell on his knees before the king, and solemnly asserted his innocence. He declared that, as to the surrender of Maine and Anjou, it was not simply his act, but that of the whole council. He spread the majority of the charges in this manner over the whole ministry; the rest he denied, and appealed to the peers around him for their knowledge of the fact that, so far from marrying his son to a daughter of Somerset, he was affianced to a daughter of Warwick.

Whatever was the amount of Suffolk's guilt, the people were resolved to listen to one penalty alone, that of his death; but to prevent him from falling under the judgment of Parliament, the king, or rather the queen, acting in his name, adopted a bold and startling expedient. He announced to him, through the lord chancellor, that, as he had not claimed to be tried by his peers, the king would exercise his prerogative, and holding him neither guilty nor innocent of the treasons with which he had been charged, would and did banish him from the kingdom for five years, on the second impeachment, for waste of the revenues. The House of Lords, astonished at this invasion of their prerogative to try those of their own body, immediately protested that this act of the king should form no precedent in bar of their privileges hereafter. With this the peers contented themselves in their corporate capacity, as some historians have suggested, from a secret compromise between the two parties.

But the ferment out of doors was terrible. The people looked upon the whole as a trick of the Court to screen the favourite, and defraud them of the satisfaction of witnessing his just punishment. There was a buzz of indignation from one end of the kingdom to the other. The most inflammatory placards were stuck on the doors of the churches, and the death of the duke was openly sworn. Two thousand people were assembled in St. Giles's to seize him on his discharge; but the intended victim escaped, for that time, the vengeance of the mob falling on his retainers. He got down to his estates in Suffolk, and after assembling the knights and squires of his neighbourhood, and before them swearing on the sacrament that he was innocent of the crimes laid to his charge, and writing a letter to his son which it is difficult to read without being convinced of his truthfulness, he embarked at Ipswich in a small vessel for Calais.

But his enemies had resolved that he should not thus escape them. The *Nicholas of the Tower*, one of the largest ships of the navy, bore down upon him on his passage, and ordered him to come on board. He was received by the captain as he stepped on deck with the ominous salutation, "Welcome, traitor!" Two nights he was kept on board this vessel, while his capture was announced on shore, and further instructions were awaited. It was clear, from a ship of the navy being used, that persons of no common influence were arrayed against him; and after a mock trial by the sailors, he was conducted to near Dover, where a small boat came alongside with a block, a rusty sword, and an executioner. The duke was lowered into the boat, and there beheaded in a barbarous manner (1450). His remains were laid on the sands near Dover, and guarded by the sheriff of Kent, till the king commanded them to be delivered to his widow who was no other than the granddaughter of Chaucer, the poet. She deposited the body in the collegiate church of Wingfield, in Suffolk.

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